

TO THE READER

RINDLY use this book very carefully. If the book is disfigured or marked or written on while in your possession the book will have to be replaced by a new copy or paid for. In case the book be a volume of set of which single volumes are not available the price of the whole set will be realized.



Library

Class No. 821.91

Book No. T12Pa

Acc. No. 6126 ✓

87
Checked
1976
(5)

Com-05 AL-23

Puck

TAGORE PAMPHLETS

57

Vol. I

compiled by

R. I. PAUL

TAGORE MEMORIAL PUBLICATIONS
LAHORE

Sixth Impression

Rupees Four

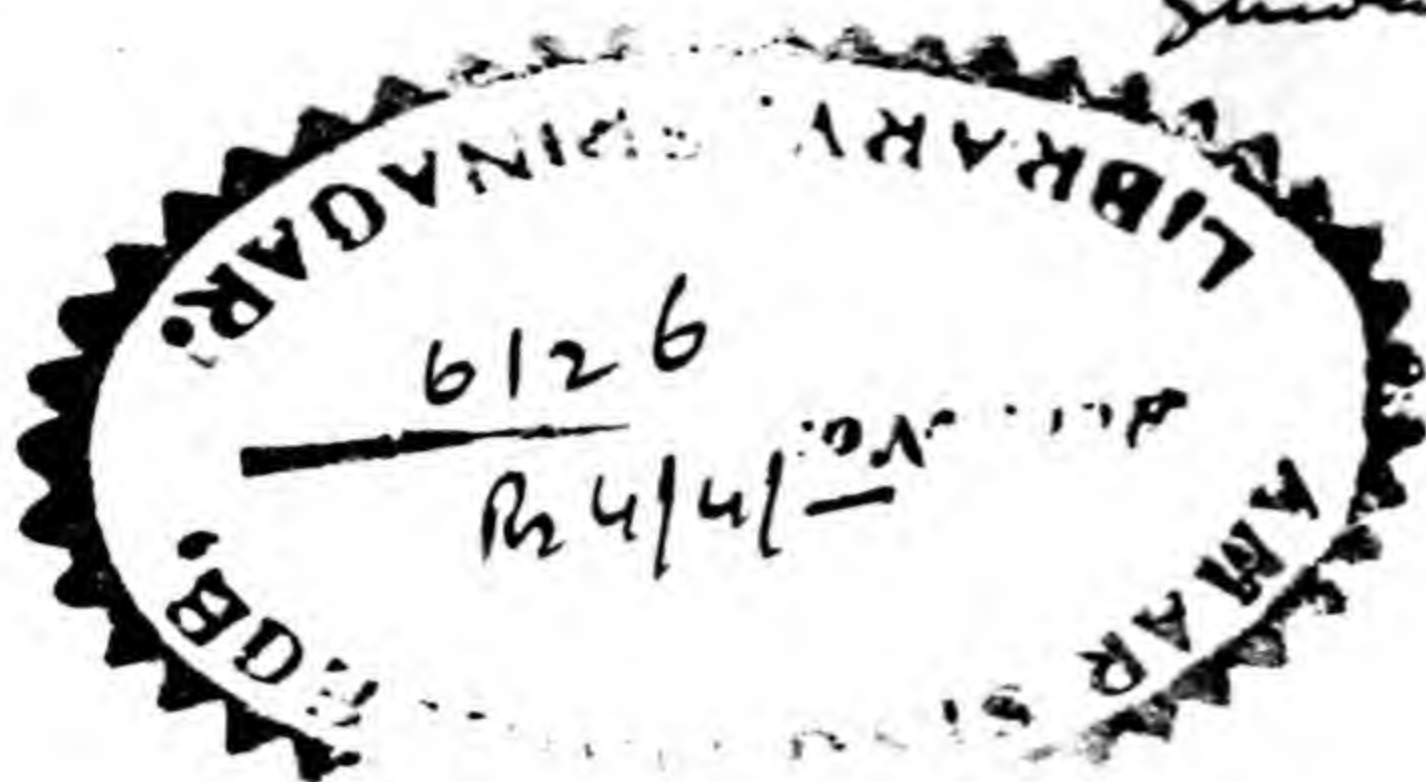
This is

LITERATURE

CRITICISM

921.91
- 12 Pa

Students See



19.7.46.

- I. *Tagore's Historic Words*
- II. *Five P's for Tagore*
- III. *Bid Me Farewell*
- IV. *Tagore's Message*
- V. *Heart of Tagore*
- VI. *Tagore Greets Death*
- VII. *Santiniketan*
- VIII. *What They Say*
- IX. *Tagore's Friend*
- X. *Tagore's Father*
- XI. *Gandhiji at Santiniketan*
- XII. *Deenabandhu*

SIX PLATES

TAGORE'S HISTORIC WORDS

(The Flaming Message of His Recent Utterances)

The wheels of Fate will some day compel the English to give up their Indian empire. But what kind of India will they leave behind, what stark misery? When the stream of their centuries' administration runs dry at last, what a waste of mud and filth they will leave behind them!

I had one time believed that the springs of civilisation would issue out of the heart of Europe, but today when I am about to quit the world that stubborn faith has gone bankrupt altogether.

Abinashanath Tagore

I

The demon of barbarity has given up all pretence and has emerged with unconcealed fangs and teeth, ready to tear up the world and spread devastation. From one end to another, the poisonous fumes of hatred defile the atmosphere. This plague of persecution, which lay dormant in the civilisation of the West, has at last roused itself to create havoc and desecrate the spirit of man.

In my earlier days I had been an admirer of the British people. The generosity of the English had not yet then been vitiated by imperialist pride. The noble nature of the British people was to the Indians a source of perpetual admiration.

I had the opportunity of listening to the speeches of John Bright, both in and outside Parliament. Even as a boy I was struck with their largeness of heart, which overflowed all narrow national bounds and spread its influence far afield. That is why even in these days when England has fallen from her former grace, I remember and cherish my recollections of those other days.

Later in life when I emerged into the stark light of bare facts, the sight of dire poverty of the Indian masses rent my heart. I then began to realise that perhaps in no other modern state had there been such hopeless dearth of the most elementary needs of existence. How could I help thinking that it was India that had kept replenishing the coffers of the British people? Such travesty of the human ideal, such aberration in the mentality of the so-called civilised races, such criminal and contemptuous indifference to the crores of helpless Indian people—I could never have imagined.

The blackest of evils that had come in

the wake of British administration was much more than the rulers' neglect and apathy to provide the minimum amenities of civilised existence. Their failure was nowhere more apparent than in the way in which they had contrived to divide the Indians amongst themselves. The pity of it all lay in the fact that now perhaps they wanted to lay the blame at the door of Indian society. This ugly culmination of Indian history would never have been possible if communalism and provincialism and lack of mutual faith were not sedulously encouraged to grow to their present vicious form by some secret conclave holding the highest responsibilities in the system of administration.

Indians are in no way inferior to the Japanese, either in intellect or capacity. The fundamental difference between the two lies in the fact that whereas India is not only overcome but is also overwhelmed by the British, Japan has never allowed her interests to be clouded over by the benevolent protectorate of some European Power.

Our rulers have established, what they call the Government of "law and order"—or in other words a policeman's administration. **It is now no longer possible for us to retain any respect for the mockery of civilisation, which believes in ruling by force and has no faith in freedom at all.** By their miserly denial of all that is best in their civilisation, by withholding true human relationship from the Indians, the English have effectively closed for us all paths to progress.

Mr. C. F. Andrews was a real Englishman, a real Christian and a true man and the whole of India will remain indebted to him for his various acts of charity which had distinguished a lifetime of dedicated service. I am specially beholden to him because he helped me to retain in my old age that feeling of respect for the English race which I was about to lose completely. Along with his memory the greatness of his people will abide with me for ever.

I had one time believed that the springs of civilisation would issue out of

the heart of Europe, but today when I am about to quit the world that stubborn faith has gone bankrupt altogether. Today my one last hope is that the deliverer will be born in this poverty-stricken country and from the East his divine message will go forth to the world at large and fill the heart of man with boundless hope. As I proceed onward I look behind to see the crumbling ruins of civilisation strewn like a vast dung-heap of futility. And I shall not commit the grievous sin of losing faith in man. I would rather look forward to the opening of a new chapter in this history after the cataclysm is over and the atmosphere rendered clean with the spirit of service and sacrifice. Perhaps that dawn will come from this horizon from the East where the sun rises. Another day will come when the unvanquished man will retrace his path of glory, despite all barriers, to win back his lost human heritage.

[SANTINIKETAN, APRIL 14TH—*Poet's address on the celebration of his eightieth birthday.*]

II

I should have thought that the decent Britisher would at least keep silent at these wrongs and be grateful to us for our inaction, but that he should add insult to injury and pour salt over our wounds passes all bounds of decency.

I have been deeply pained at Miss Rathbone's open letter to Indians. I do not know who Miss Rathbone is, but I take it that she represents the mentality of the average "well-intentioned" Britisher. Her letter is mainly addressed to Jawaharlal and I have no doubt that if that noble fighter of freedom's battle had not been gagged behind prison bars by Miss Rathbone's countrymen, he would have made a fitting and spirited reply to her gratuitous sermon. His enforced

silence makes it necessary for me to voice a protest even from my sick-bed.

The lady has ill-served the cause of her people by addressing so indiscreet, indeed impertinent, a challenge to our conscience.

She is scandalised at our ingratitude—that having “drunk deeply at the wells of English thought” we should still have some thought left for our poor country’s interests. English thought, in so far as it is representative of the best traditions of Western enlightenment, had indeed taught us much, but let me add that those of our countrymen, who have profited by it, have done so despite the official British attempts to ill-educate us. We might have achieved introduction to Western learning through any other European language. Have all the other peoples in the world waited for the British to bring them enlightenment?

It is sheer insolent self-complacence on the part of our so-called English friends to assume that had they not “taught” us

we would still have remained in the dark ages.

Through the official British channels of education in India have flowed to our children in schools not the best of English thought but its refuse, which has only deprived them of a wholesome repast at the table of their own culture.

Assuming, however, that English language is the only channel left to us for "enlightenment," all that "drinking deeply at its wells" has come to is that in 1931, even after a couple of centuries of British administration, only about one per cent of the population was found to be literate in English. While in the U.S.S.R. in 1932, after only fifteen years of Soviet administration, 98 per cent of the children were educated. (These figures are taken from the *Statesman's* year-book, an English publication, not likely to err on the Russian side.)

But even more necessary than the so-called culture are the bare elementary needs of existence, on which alone can any

superstructure of enlightenment rest. And what have the British, who have held tight the purse-strings of our nation for more than two centuries and exploited its resources, done for our poor people?

I look around and see famished bodies crying for bread. I have seen women in villages dig up mud for a few drops of drinking water, for wells are even more scarce in Indian villages than schools.

I know that the population of England itself is today in danger of starvation and I sympathise with them, but when I see how the whole might of the British Navy is engaged in convoying food vessels to the English shores and when I recollect that I have seen our people perish of hunger and not even a cartload of rice brought to their door from the neighbouring district, I cannot help contrasting the British at home with the British in India.

Shall we then be grateful to the British, if not for keeping us fed, at least for preserving law and order?

I look around and see riots raging all over the country. When crores of Indian lives are lost, our property looted, our women dishonoured, the mighty British arms stir in no action. Only the British voice is raised from overseas to chide us for our unfitness to put our house in order.

Examples are not wanting in history when even fully armed warriors have shrunk before superior might and contingencies have arisen in the present war when even the bravest among the British, French and Greek soldiers have had to evacuate the battle-field in Europe, because they were overwhelmed by superior armaments,—but when our poor, unarmed and helpless peasants, encumbered with crying babes, flee from homes unable to protect them from armed goondas, the British officials perhaps smile in contempt at our cowardice.

[SANTINIKETAN, JUNE 4TH—*Poet's trenchant reply to Miss Rathbone's impertinent challenge to our conscience.*]

FIVE P'S FOR TAGORE

(Prince - Poet - Philosopher - Prophet - Patriot)



Gurudev's passing away has left us all, who have grown up in the shadow of his towering genius and mighty personality and enveloped by his great tradition, forlorn and in the dark. India's greatest star, illuminating not only our own country but the world with synthesis of the rich wisdom of the past and of the present, has set, and our hearts are empty. Yet his voice rings in our ears and the flaming message of his recent utterances will be our guiding star. In line with the great Indian sages of the past he has left us an imperishable inheritance and even at the moment of his passing away, we think with pride and gratitude the love and reverence of this magnificent life and its achievements. That precious inheritance we shall treasure and I earnestly trust that every Indian will consider it his duty to help in the development and growth of Santiniketan and Visvabharati, which embody Gurudev's ideal.

Jawaharlal Nehru

PRINCE

"Do you expect to live many more years," asked Professor Edward Thompson some two decades back. "Eight, no, seven now. I shall die at sixty-eight," replied the Poet smilingly. The Poet's own prediction was based on his horoscope. But that was belied and the Poet lived up to a ripe age of eighty.

Tagore saw the light on the 7th of May, 1861, in the princely family of Tagores, so intimately associated with the history of Indian Renaissance. He was the youngest of the seven sons of Maharshi Devendranath Tagore. The Maharshi was a unique personality combining in himself the refinement and culture of old aristocracy with keen insight, vast erudition and deep spiritual fervour. When Raja Rammohan Roy died prematurely in England in 1833 and when the newly-founded Brahma Samaj fell upon evil times, the Maharshi was attracted towards it by a stray leaf of *Ishopanishad* and dedicated himself to the cause. Maharshi was a profound thinker, a mystic poet and a writer of sublime prose. He drew his inspiration from the Vedic literature, all the best things of which

he knew by heart, but in times of despair found consolation in the writings of Hafiz and Omar Khayyam.

In the family, in which Tagore was born, the study and disinterested criticism of life, which is considered essential for the growth of great poetry, was found in its fullest measure. Maharshi's eldest son Dwijendranath, besides being a poet of no mean order, was a Sanskrit and Greek scholar with a keen appreciation of these two literatures. Satyendranath was the writer of beautiful songs. Jyotirindranath was a musician, artist and French scholar.

The great father, in the beginning, did not think much of his youngest son and was not a little amused when one of early compositions of the Poet was brought to his notice. But he always encouraged him and indulged, in his distant way, his whims and caprices. Of all his sons, he was the only one who had the opportunity of accompanying him in his long sojourns to the Himalayas, his tour in Northern India, in his trip on the Ganges and the Padma and in his meditations in Santiniketan.

No university can claim Tagore as her *alumnus*, for though he was attached to Calcutta and London Universities in a very feeble way, through schools he never reached the university stage. Early in his life he was initiated in the study of Sanskrit and Bengali and before he reached his fourteenth year, he had finished every bit of Bengali literature and remembered all that was beautiful in Sanskrit drama and poetry. From this period his English began to receive special attention and a few years later was

perfected in England where besides being put under coaches, he attended lectures of Professor Henry Morley at the University College, London. His reading was varied and extensive even from his boyhood. He read whatever he liked and not a little of it did he translate. At the wish of his father, he translated portions of Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*, a favourite book of the latter. This habit of reading which was formed so early characterized all his life. He urged to give the better part of his day to reading and writing and his day commenced long before the sunrise and was carried up to the midnight. It is difficult to say if in India today there is another person who has read as much as intensively and with as much eager delight as he.

POET

In one of the aphorisms of Chanakya it has been said that a king is revered in his own country but a man of learning is revered everywhere. If for the "man of learning" we substitute the "man of genius," the man of original creative powers, the truth of Chanakya's aphorism will impress itself more clearly. Of all human things the inspired world endures the longest. The first in order comes the guide and teacher of humanity, men like Buddha and Christ. The next are the poets, the Homers and the Valmikis, the Shakespeares and the Kalidasas of literature. For them there are no limitations. Their appeal is to humanity as a whole and they are admired and praised everywhere irrespective of racial and national barriers. Tagore's glorious achievements as a man of letters, his fervid patriotism mingled with his love for humanity at large, and his eminence in the form of poetry made him a unique figure in contemporary world.

Tagore came from one of the most aristocratic families of Bengal, but in him more than the aristocracy of birth was the aristocracy of character, of thought, of poetry and of philosophy. Whenever

one went outside India, the name of Tagore was mentioned with the utmost possible respect and it added to their stature to know that they were the countrymen of Tagore. He was held in such high esteem all over the world.

It was his peculiar good fortune that fame came to him during his lifetime with an amazing fulness and abundance of measure allied with the fulness of years. He belonged to a race which had been subject to other races for several centuries and has even now no place in the Council of the Nations. He wrote chiefly—though not wholly—in a language spoken and understood in only one province of India. Yet with all these manifest disadvantages his fame reached the remotest corners of the world, while his works have been translated into almost all important languages in all continents.

Tagore had made contributions to realms of thought, poetry and art which would be much more lasting monuments to his intellect, to his genius and to his character than any other monument that we might raise. He wrote poetry because he had an urge for it and never did he write anything unless he had some message to give to his countrymen and to the world at large. His poetry would take its place by the side of the best at any time in history of the world. Naturally we felt proud of one who shed so much lustre on the name of India.

Tagore had the proud privilege of being born in a nest of singing birds. His father was a poet. His brothers were also poets and scholars of

no mean order. In the long trips with his father, he was frequently asked by the latter to sing devotional songs, mostly composed by him and his elder sons. He possessed a rich vigorating voice which held everybody in thrall. One day he sang a new song which received the praise of his father and when asked about its authorship, humbly acknowledged it to be his own composition.

On the anniversary of the Brahma Samaj the Maharshi set the seal of his high approval by including a large number of his hymns in the programme and offering him a cheque, a reward which he regarded as more precious than all the prizes that he was destined to win.

Songs followed in quick succession on all conceivable subjects, a large part of them was devotional, a few on patriotic themes and revolutionary ideas and quite a fair number on the ecstasy of love. In the latter part of the last century, few people appreciated his poetry, and it was no wonder. It presented ideas with which our countrymen were not familiar and in a tone far different from the well-known. The poems were besides pervaded by a spirit of non-confirmism and irreverence for everything that was traditional and accepted. The old people at once discovered in them a dangerous germ of corruption. But for all this, and particularly for his mystic approach to the question of life and love, he was hailed by his young admirers as the Shelley of Bengal. In him the younger generation found the voice of youth, the flame of the fire which was burning in their heart, the answer which

they were seeking to their peculiar problems, the echo of their longings and hopes.

In his younger years he was a great romantic figure. His poetry was ecstatic with the very lyric quality of his youth; the exuberant note of youth, the extravagance of youth was there. In his middle years the rapture was somewhat stilled and a graver note came into his music. But in his later years, he returned to something of the old ecstasy; mellowed, grown richer, grown softer, yet none the less it was something of the ecstasy of youth, for he lived with young people, he drew inspiration from their laughter; he spoke with them and renewed his views; he spoke with them and renewed his dreams and what he gave to youth was a benediction and what he received from youth was an inspiration.

"I remember him," says Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, "at various stages of his life, various stages of my life. When I was a very little girl in Hyderabad my mother used to sing in a rich *mezzo-soprano* voice lyrics that moved me, though I did not understand the tongue in which she sang. 'It was a song of one Rabindranath Tagore,' she told me. 'Ravi Babu,' she said, 'was the idol of all Bengal.' She told me that all men and all women sang the songs; the boatmen on the river, the peasants in the fields, the students in their schools, women at their household tasks, men doing the labours of men in cities and hamlets, towns and the hill-sides, in fields everywhere they sang the songs of Rabindranath Tagore. If they were glad, spontaneously his songs rose to their lips; if they were sad, his songs were a

sanctuary of broken hearts. Did men need inspiration, he inspired; if men needed to be rebuked in a gentle fashion, he rebuked them; and when his country was in distress, when his country saw dreams of freedom from every form of bondages, he held aloft the torch himself from which all eager hearts caught their own torches."

The Nobel Prize for Literature awarded to him in 1913 was merely an introduction to the literary world and since then he scaled the dazzling heights of fame with ease and his writings were eagerly read in both the old and the new worlds. He had been hailed as a sage and a teacher wherever he went and thousands hung spell-bound upon his words wherever he spoke during his fairly frequent itineraries throughout the world.

It is difficult to decide which aspect of Tagore's varied work should be stressed, on which quality of the man attention should be concentrated and which achievement of his should be especially mentioned. There is hardly a form of literature which he did not attempt and which he did not adorn. It is particularly as a lyric poet that he will be remembered. He made a very valuable contribution to Indian music and he was a great actor and painter. He was no mere dreamer of dreams. His constructive work shows that it is possible for a poet and a musician to do abiding work of very high character. There is no other centre of learning where at one time or other so many representatives of the cultures of the world were assembled as at Santiniketan. Tagore along with Mahatma Gandhi was

one of the two Indians known all over the world. In almost every country at railway bookstalls we can find translations of *Gitanjali*. It is acclaimed as few books of poetry had ever been acclaimed. One of the foremost scholars of the day, Professor Gilbert Murray, addressed to Tagore in 1934 a letter in which he began by acclaiming Tagore as the greatest poet of the age and one of the greatest thinkers of his generation. That is the considered opinion of almost every thinker and scholar.

There is no figure in the history of the world literature, barring the German poet Goethe, who can be compared with Tagore in the range of his accomplishments, achievements and the universality of his interests and spirit.

Unlike Goethe, however, Tagore thought of his art as something integral with the life of his people, something that was intimately woven into the fabric of living to such an extent that the fulfilment of his literary message could only be achieved by the lighting of the lamps within. Throughout his vast output of poetry, short stories and philosophy and miscellaneous writings, Tagore always came back to the ever-recurring refrain—refrain, it may be said, of the entire Indian culture—of the unity and the fulfilment of the human soul through the Divine.

These are not the days of religion. These are the days of power—power of ruthlessness and destruction, but even they must pay homage to the ultimate end of all this fury and passion, namely peace and happiness of mankind. Tagore, as everybody is aware, was a great musician and came from a family

where the environment suggested a unique symphony—a kind of distillation of the cultures of the old and the new.

It was left to Rabindranath to pierce through these artificial barriers and strike the very soil of Indian inspiration where flow the eternal springs of Indian culture. The songs that Tagore sang were in the great Vaishnava tradition, and while we may admire the music of the word of the literary grace of the writing, the central object will be missed if the inner core of such writing and even the justification of it is not realized, and it is precisely in this that he is likely to be missed by the sophisticated generation of the present day. The people at large understood and drank deep of his mystic song, for to them it was a part of their very lives and their inner experience.

In a country such as ours with five thousand years' old literary traditions verbal felicity and literary elegance are taken for granted. A poet, therefore, needs to be something more than a literary craftsman to command his audience, and it is a great tribute to Tagore's genius that he lives and will continue to do so in the life of the people for many a long day. As a devotional poet, his place is alongside of Kabir, Surdas and Mirabai—writers of songs which affected the hearts and illumined the soul within. As a writer of short stories of a new medium, so far Indian literature is concerned, his place is among the greatest of European writers. As a dramatist there is no figure in this entire range of Indian literature who since the days of Kalidasa can

be put by the side of Rabindranath Tagore. His short plays, in particular, are masterpieces of eloquent and significant writing. The words seem to be uttered with unique intensity and concentrated passion. They seem to be charged with some inner significance.

"In the course of my travel all over the world," says Mrs. Naidu, "I found that the name of Tagore was the living symbol of India in every corner.

"I was passing one day through a hospital in Budapest—a surgical boarding it was, I think. Great many beds were lying there. People knew that I was coming and under every pillow a hand was put and a book was brought out and everybody said Tagore, Tagore and Tagore. The book was a new translation in Hungarian of one of Tagore's plays.

"One year I spent the winter in Scandinavia. You know that it is from Sweden that the Nobel Prize came to Tagore. So naturally Sweden was full of Tagore and the Swedish lady, who translated *Gitanjali* before England had heard of Tagore, was one of my hostesses. And, of course, everybody wanted to know about Tagore in Sweden. It was only when I passed on to Norway on the Norwegian mountain slopes where there were scattered farm-houses and where farm-houses were snow-bound during winter and where in those little solitary houses cattle were tending and for nearly six months there was nothing but darkness—it was there that I found farmers in families—peasants, living by provision for aeons throughout the winter in the collected works of Rabindranath.

“ Passing through France, Germany and Italy I found that there was Tagore everywhere. In America and Canada they wanted to know about Tagore. In East Africa where savage tribes lived they knew that there was a man—a great god they thought he was—called Tagore. He had reached the hearts of the primitive. There was no country in the world where they had not heard of Tagore. Only a Passport Officer, apparently, in the frontiers in the U.S.A. and Canada had not heard of Tagore. Tagore's passport got mislaid and though people told the Passport Officer that it was Tagore, the Officer said that he wanted to see the passport. He thought that Tagore was an old Jew. He had not heard of Tagore but the rest of the civilized world knew Tagore.

“ I happened to be in England when *Gitanjali* was published. My great friend, the great Irish poet of this generation, William Butler Yeats, was mad when he read *Gitanjali* in translation. He absolutely went mad. He thought there was the great message of hope for which the heart-sick and the soul-sick was so long waiting. When Tagore came to England in 1913, very beautiful with beard and locks and robe, the whole of cold England became warmed up in the sun of his song. We saw spectacles, sometimes comic, but very sincere, of five old ladies sitting in a row in a bus and reading *Gitanjali*. Funny spectacles were witnessed in unexpected places.

“ But these were a great tribute to the great Indian who by his genius has exalted India like a star

Everywhere verses were composed by the people showing how the people's minds had been exercised and influenced by this man. I remember also one great occasion when Tagore was living in a suburb of England. He was seated in a room in the midst of English-speaking poets and American poets. He sat there like Christ with a beautiful face and some of the poets thought, so wrongly of course, that everything that Tagore said and did had a mystic meaning. Tagore got fed up but he had a great sense of humour."

Every poet likes fame but sensible poets do not like foolish adulation. Tagore was so much admired for his beauty, so much admired for his beard, so much admired for his locks, so much admired for putting his head up and putting his head down that he got fed up. He was eminently realistic, practical and common sensical.

It is a mistake to think that poets live in the clouds. Shelley has said that poets live on love and fame. Quite true. But there is a fear of indigestion from too much love and fame. Tagore was suffering from terrible indigestion through too much love and fame but his sense of humour cured him of his indigestion.

When Mr. Montague came to India, he paid a visit to Bengal. With him he had a Bengalee friend. Mr. Montague heard beautiful music in a jungle. He rose up and found that a handful of peasants were singing. He was curious to know who was the writer of the song and what the song was about. He asked, "Whose song is it?" They said, "We

do not know." Why should they know? The song had become a part of the heritage of the Bengalee people. What matters if it was Tagore's song or not. It was the possession, the living possession of the people of Bengal. That was real fame. That was real immortality that a writer should remain anonymous and the heart of the people should accept the song. Thus through his music and song immortality was conferred on Tagore in his lifetime.

Tagore's poetry was not confined to language. His poetry overflowed in various directions and took various shapes. His *Sriniketan* is as much a poem, an epic poem as *Gitanjali* is a lyric poem. His idea on education is as creative as any great drama of his. His patriotism was passionate, burning love of country, burning passion for freedom. The poetry of the man expressed itself in different ways.

There have been great poets in the world but their poetry was more or less confined to normal and traditional vehicles, i.e., their works. But this man of ours, this countryman of ours, this friend of ours, this father of ours, this prophet of ours, this beloved of ours—he was a traditional poet no doubt using the language of music, but his constructive and objective things will survive for many generations.

PHILOSOPHER

Gone ! For ever gone, the idol of millions for over half a century ! Tagore was not only a great poet but also one of the greatest mystic thinkers of the East in modern times. His mysticism flows into poetry ; his poetry bathes in mysticism.

“ My poet’s vanity dies in shame before Thy sight, O Master Poet, I have sat down at Thy feet. Only let me make my life simple and stright, like a flute of reed for Thee to fill with music.”

He was a poet who never dragged Muse down to the low level of sectarianism. He was a mystic who never lost touch with the world. He loved ‘ the beautiful dust of the earth.’ He believed that he had come ‘ to the great fair of common human life.’ From this point of view he represented a movement of thought, called Karma Yoga, which stresses an active life in this world as against the run-away philosophy of life preached in this country for over two thousand years.

More than one thinker during the last fifty years saw that the Indian mind was suffering from the disease of self-centredness, lethargy, false vanity and lack of social sense. Against this Vivekanand pro-

tested and founded the school of dynamic Vedanta with his great conception of 'Daridra Narayana', God in the poor. Against this also Tilak took up his cudgels and wrote his monumental commentary on the *Bhagavad Gita*, making therein a tremendous effort to prove that the real message of the *Gita* was activity and not inactivity. Tagore sang his protest against the proverbial Indian asceticism in his own inimitable way :

" Whom dost thou worship in this lonely dark corner of a temple with doors all shut ? Open thine eyes and see thy God is not before thee.

" He is there where the tiller is tilling the hard ground and where the path-maker is breaking stones. He is with them in sun and in shower and his garment is covered with dust. Put off thy holy mantle and even like him come down on the dusty soil."

But all this preaching touches only the symptoms and not the real disease. Tilak and Vivekanand became conscious of the fact that something was fundamentally wrong with the Indian mind but they could not diagnose the disease because they were victims of it themselves. The real malady of the Indian mind is its life-goal, the ideal of personal salvation, Nirvana or Moksha, which is two thousand years old and which seems to have affected the chromosomes. The life-goal does not allow a full-fledged interest in the world and its values and makes the mind unsocial and unnational.

Tagore alone, of all his contemporaries, questioned the life-goal, though he did not make the protest very emphatic. In one of his verses he says

" Deliverance ? Where is this deliverance to be found ? Our master himself has joyfully taken upon him the bonds of creation ; he is bound with us all for ever."

Those of us who sincerely feel that the hope of India lies in giving up the unfortunate goal of Nirvana will always remember the above verse and will give Tagore the first place among the contemporary social thinkers of India.

PROPHET

What was significant of Rabindranath Tagore ? The world is full of poets ; the world is full of music ; the world is full of beauty. Why then was Rabindranath Tagore so adored, so loved and so worshipped by tens of thousands of human beings of the world ? He was born in Bengal ; all his traditions were in Bengal ; all his heritage of mind and spirit lay in Bengal ; all his poetry is filled with the landscape of Bengal, rivers of Bengal, the flowers of Bengal, the village life of Bengal, the heavy clouds of August that brood upon the rivers ; everything is of his own country and yet he was a poet of the whole world. He wrote in a language known to few, but it became the language of the hearts of myriads of people. What was the secret ? What was his message ? His secret was his heart-felt love for all humanity. His message was the message of human service and human love.

Sitting in his village home, sitting at the shadowed Himalayas sometimes, sitting in a boat and floating down a river listening the song of the boatmen, sitting in his own Santiniketan, like a prophet amongst his followers, he listened to " the

still sad voice of humanity " and with his mystic eye he looked into the hearts of men and women, he understood the secret of their tears and the secret of their laughter. From his own limited landscape he understood, he visualised, he pictured the entire varied landscapes in the world and he knew as if by magic the secrets of all hearts. He lifted his voice and sang ; and in this song was a laughter of all the brightness of the world. He lowered his voice and sang and in those lower tones was all the anguish of human sorrow. He lifted his eyes and saw the little children at play and his song tinkled ; his song shone ; his song echoed with the joy of childhood. He heard the prayer of spirits agonising to find communion with the joy of childhood. He heard the prayer of spirits agonising to find communion with the Invisible God. The deep solemn tone of their agonising filled his song. He looked upon the conflict of the world and his heart was pierced with sorrow, for the sorrow of the world. He felt dew upon his feet ; he felt the stars upon his head ; he listened the music of great rivers ; he saw the sunset upon great mountains and all these were caught and crystallised with his magic words.

He wandered up and down the world, noting, thinking, brooding and out of all his experience, out of all his vision, he wove a great panorama of experience for himself. He read the ancient scriptures, the ancient philosophy of his country, he made a comparative study of the scripture texts, the books of literature, of arts of all other countries ; and his heart made a great affirmation through his reading

and his thinking, his travelling and experience, a great affirmation of the unity of all mankind.

When he went to Europe, not the first time or the second time, but in 1913, that great epoch-making year for the world as well as for himself, when he went with his *Gitanjali* in his hand, when the great Irish poet Yeats, filled with rapture for his revelation of the spiritual, stood sponsor for the genius of Tagore to the world, I remember with a thrill the reaction of Europe to the genius of Tagore. *Gitanjali* was the message of peace and tranquillity for which a fevered world was waiting and from one end of Europe to another, the name of Tagore became a beacon and banner. Men and women looked to him for a new life, new courage, new hope. They were torn with fear and doubt. They appreciated his knowledge of the things that were to come to Europe.

Very shortly, because, after all, it was a year after the publishing of the *Gitanjali* that the Great War in Europe took place, he felt they needed something to comfort them beforehand, something to give them strength in anticipation of that time of tragedy which somehow instinctively they foreshadowed in their lives. And Tagore with his beautiful flowing robes, Tagore with his beautiful flowing locks, Tagore with his beautiful flowing beard became a figure of romance, became a figure of every kind of fascination to which the hearts of old and young responded. England, usually so shy of expressing emotion, England, usually so reserved, so little ready to accord enthusi-

astic reception especially to foreigners, went almost mad over Tagore.

When he went to Scandinavia, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, France, Germany, America, Canada, South America, to all the countries of the world, he was the prophet of a new vision. Here was the wise man from the East, the wise man bringing a new message, the wise man bringing a new vision and a new version of life, and he talked to them of the spiritual riches of his country and he went out as the great ambassador of his country. It is said he was a mystic. Perhaps he was a mystic—all poets are mystics, all Indians are mystics ; but people forget that besides his grave and lovely mysticism he was really a man of humour and humanity. He played with children as one of them. He flirted with beauty because all poets are perennial lovers of beauty ; and he sat with old men wisely stroking his beard and talking with them deep truths of life, and death, and re-birth and re-death and wherever he went men followed him saying : What vision of beauty is this ? In a drab world, what is this radiant figure ? Is he a priest, is he a prophet, is he a seer ?

PATRIOT

“There have been few personalities who have inspired our countrymen with the spirit of nationalism as Tagore had done. Although dead he still speaks and will continue to speak for centuries,” says Dr. Khan Sahib.

We honour according to our temperament whatever we think supreme in Tagore. Poets know his poetry, musicians his music, nationalists his patriotism, artists his great personality, statesmen of the world his internationalism. Seers and foretellers of tomorrow's destiny saw in him a supreme prophet who had the forevision of a glorious country and the brotherhood of an emancipated world. Each of us honour him according to what we think highest in his life.

When all is said and done of the artist in him, of the poet in him, of the philosopher in him, of the internationalist in him, of the world prophet in him—whatever it may be—it must be remembered that he was after all the sun. The sun has many rays and reaches every corner. It shines upon the just and it shines upon the unjust. It gives warmth and life to the seeds buried in the heart. It illuminates

the world. It gives comfort and solace to the aged lives shivering in cold winter. It gives hope and courage. It is the symbol of all dreams and visions, of all creative forces. It is the sun.

It may be asserted without any fear of exaggeration that no other writer has so large a measure of appreciation in his own lifetime. Honours were showered upon him from all quarters. Perhaps he was the only literary man who discarded a knighthood after accepting it; this act of renunciation is not only a testimony of his pure and unostentatious patriot but of his sturdy independence of outlook and naturally it heightened his fame.

To Tagore politics in the sense in which that term is generally used and understood had no particular fascination; he very rarely, if ever, participated in any active political controversy. But if we take politics in its human and not in its professional connotation, he was undoubtedly one of the most potent political forces of Modern Bengal and Modern India. His intense love for his country and her people and his deep appreciation of sympathy with her ancient civilization breathes through almost every line of his writings. He never failed to protest in burning words against the wrongs done to his people; such as, for example, when he condemned the Jallianwala Bagh outrages of 1919 or the treatment meted out to Indian settlers in Canada as a protest against which he refused to visit that country or when he condemned the Communal Award at a public meeting held in Calcutta in July, 1936, or more recently when he gave the most trenchant

rejoinder to Miss Eleanor Rathbone's so-called appeal to Indians.

"I have been deeply pained," he says, "at Miss Rathbone's open letter to Indians. Her letter is mainly addressed to Jawaharlal and I have no doubt that if that noble fighter of freedom's battle had not been gagged behind prison bars by Miss Rathbone's countrymen, he would have made a fitting and spirited reply to her gratuitous sermon.

"The lady has ill-served the cause of her people by addressing so indiscreet, indeed impertinent, a challenge to our conscience.

"It is sheer insolent self-complacence on the part of our so-called English friends to assume that had they not 'taught' us we would still have remained in the dark ages.

"Through the official British channels of education in India have flowed to our children in schools not the best of English thought but its refuse, which has only deprived them of a wholesome repast at the table of their own culture.

"I look around and see famished bodies crying for bread. I have seen women in villages dig up mud for a few drops of drinking water, for wells are even more scarce in Indian villages than schools.

"I look around and see riots raging all over the country. When crores of Indian lives are lost, our property looted, our women dishonoured, the mighty British arms stir in no action. Only the British voice is raised from overseas to chide us for our unfitness to put our house in order."

Thus while not participating in active day-to-day politics he brought the distinctive political philosophy which he cultivated to bear on the examination of the Indian problems from time to time and on all such occasions when he spoke on the wrongs done to India and Indians or demanded some rights or other for the country, it was as if it was the voice of India herself that was speaking. His representative character on these occasions had been acknowledged by no less a person than Mahatma Gandhi himself, between whom and the Poet there existed a genuine and sincere bond of mutual love, reverence and affection.

When he saw that Europe had become the sick-man of the world, for hatred was growing instead of true democracy; he did not hesitate to rebuke the ruthlessness and commercialism present in the modern politics of Europe.

"When I emerged into the stark light of bare facts," he says, "the sight of dire poverty of the Indian masses rent my heart. I then began to realise that perhaps in no other modern State had there been such hopeless dearth of the most elementary needs of existence. How could I help thinking that it was India that had kept replenishing the coffers of the British people? Such travesty of the human ideal, such aberration in the mentality of the so-called civilized races, such criminal and contemptuous indifference to the crores of helpless Indian people—I could never have imagined.

"The blackest of evils that had come in the wake of British administration was much more than

the rulers' neglect and apathy to provide the minimum amenities of the civilized existence.

"It is now no longer possible for us to retain any respect for the mockery of civilization, which believes in ruling by force and has no faith in freedom at all.

"I had one time believed that the springs of civilization would issue out of the heart of Europe, but today when I am about to quit the world that stubborn faith has gone bankrupt altogether. Today my one last hope is that the deliverer will be born in this poverty-stricken country and from the East his divine message go forth to the world at large and fill the heart of man with boundless hope. As I proceed onward I look behind to see the crumbling ruins of civilization strewn like a vast dung-heap of futility. And I shall not commit the grievous sin of losing faith in man. I would rather look forward to the opening of a new chapter in his history after the cataclysm is over and the atmosphere rendered clean with the spirit of service and sacrifice. Perhaps that dawn will come from this horizon from the East where the sun rises. Another day will come when the unvanquished man will retrace his path of glory, despite all barriers to win back his lost human heritage."

Now, Tagore is nowhere among us; Tagore has left us; his words we still hear. They bring solace to our sick and weary heart; they give strength to our faint and flickering faith.

"I am greatly grieved," says Generalissimo Chiang Kai-Shek, "by the death of Dr. Rabindranath

Tagore. The aged sage is no more. The world cannot hear his noble instructive voice again. Especially Eastern civilization has lost a great teacher. I feel really mournful when I look at the sky above the south neighbour country."

"Sir William Rothenstein's portrait of Dr. Tagore," suggests Mr. Bernard Shaw in an exclusive interview, "should be hung in one of the British public libraries."

"Gurudev's soul is immortal and he lives though dead. Gurudev longed to serve the world through India and breathed his last while doing so. His experiment is unfinished. His mortal remains are no more but his soul is immortal like ours. Taken in this sense none perishes or dies. None is born. Gurudev lives significantly. His tendencies were universal, mostly heavenly through which he will be immortal. Santiniketan, Sriniketan and Visva-bharati—all these are manifestations of his action. They were his soul for which Deenabandhu Andrews left his world, followed by Gurudev. Our true homage should be to maintain these institutions which he is watching from wherever he may be," says Mahatma Gandhi.

*may the ...
Tagore ...
... ..*

BID ME FAREWELL

(Last Poem - Last Article - Last Song - Last Message)

AMAR SINGH COLL

I have got my leave. Bid me farewell, my brothers ! I bow to you all and take my departure.

Here I give back the keys of my door — and I give up all claims to my house. I only ask for last kind words from you.

We were neighbours for long, but I received more than I could give. Now the day has dawned and the lamp that lit my dark corner is out. A summons has come and I am ready for my journey.

Abinashanath Tarku

SORROW'S DARK NIGHT

[Poet's Last Poem on Death]

Sorrow's dark night, again and again,
Has come to my door.
Its only weapon I saw,
Was pain's twisted brow, fear's hideous
gestures
Preluding its deception in darkness.
Whenever I have believed in its mask of
dread,
Fruitless defeat has followed.
This game of defeat and victory is life's
delusion ;
From childhood, at each step, clings this
spectre
Filled with sorrow's mockery.
A moving screen of varied fears—
Death's skilful handiwork wrought in
scattered gloom.

A REVERIE

[Poet's Last Article]

The Kadamba has appeared at my door at last—cluster upon cluster of it, peeping out from its leaves in the eagerness of new life. The rainy season is here with its many girts, the bountiful malati, the proud and dainty tube roses. A regular beauty competition is in progress in the wilds. They are all here, ready to tune to fresh harmony the mighty music of beauty. They are all around us, bringing the gift of pleasure to every taste.

The poet looked on the peace of this beauty, and a time came when he recognised that in the scheme of nature also peace does not run in any continuous stream. From time to time there comes a drought, and the thorns of violence are awakened to life along

the paths of a smooth existence. The grace and elixir of life, so abundant for so long, falls withered on the parched ground in desperate weariness. Then from the temple altars of earth resounds a cruel mantra—"make conquest—for so mayst thou win pleasure." Violence stands forth with drawn sword among the ordered ways of love. It tests them without mercy. In this strife of values everything is broken, scattered, torn to shreds. To things built up with painstaking care it shows no respect, but tramples them wantonly under foot. Its victims who suffer and are deceived are loud in their reproaches and curses, yet the moment they get the opportunity they themselves begin to sharpen their weapons in greed of plunder.

So the mind must needs question—what is the true purpose of this great order of creation? Is the end of its dervish dance of violence merely the ashes of the mighty funeral pyre on some blood-stained field of Kurukshetra? We read in history of the

coming of Tartars, Pathans, Moguls, each claiming to raise their victorious standard to the highest point of human glory. With shouts of triumph they proclaimed nothing above themselves. But where are they today, and to what does that victorious standard witness as it lies in the dust ?

There is no finality in violence—men have seen that again and again.

Today also we see all around us its terrible play of destruction. Where is the end ? We know indeed that the end is death, but must it be such a loathsome death as this ? The great of many lands have taught us of the nature of ultimate truth, and each of us has placed his faith where his own inclination led. Yet after them the chariot wheels of time have rumbled on, drowning the sound of those mantras, and crushing peace and beauty from their path to reveal violence in all its varied ugliness. If this is the final purpose of creation, in what uncreated emptiness is man's imagination to seek its heaven. For that heaven beckons us

on, somewhere, to the ways of peace. And the question that haunts the mind continually in these days of universal cataclysm is—will mankind anywhere succeed in actualising the truth of that ideal? The answer wanders lamenting still in the void. But the structure of human life can never be built on the negative supposition that there is no answer. The ideal exists somewhere, and from it all that it derives its existence. Without it, all would have melted into nothingness at the beginning of the ages.

Meanwhile, at dead of night rain has been falling in the sal-groves, and I awake in the morning to the rich comradeship of the malati with the red dawn. My red cow, her sleek body glossy in the morning sunlight, wanders at leisure to crop her store of tender grass shoots. There is no dissension in the current of this beauty ; the roar of the cannon cannot overcome it. Thus by many silent voices does not returning season whisper its message of faith at the poet's door.

O PILOT OF MY LIFE

[In the neighbourhood of the two chhatim trees on the grounds of Santiniketan, near the Maharshi's customary seat of meditation, the sradha ceremony of Rabindranath Tagore was performed in accordance with the Poet's wishes. The inmates of Santiniketan and Sriniketan paid their homage to the memory of their revered "Gurudeva".]

Mahamahopadhyaya Pandit Vidhusekhara Sastri and Pandit Kshitimohan Sen, who acted as the priests on the occasion, accompanied Shri Rathindranath Tagore, the Poet's son, followed by Shri Subir Tagore and a large number of students, in white robes and carrying flower-offerings, as he walked from the Mandir to the place of ceremony.

The ceremony opened with this song which the Poet had particularly desired should be sung on the occasion.]

O Pilot of my life,
Cast loose the moorings

Of this frail vessel,
For before me
Lies the vast ocean of peace.

Comrade of mine for ever,
Take me and hold me close.
The lodestar will shed
Its steadfast glow
On the never-ending path to eternity.

O Saviour,
Your mercy and forgiveness
Are the inexhaustible wealth
On which I draw
For this my last journey.

May the bonds of mortality melt away,
May the vast universe take me in its
arms,
And may it be given me
Fearlessly to stand face to face
Before the Great Unknown.

THY PRESENCE

[The sradha ceremony came to a close with the Poet's most favourite song.]

Far as I gaze at the depth of Thy immensity

I find no trace there of sorrow or death
or separation.

Death assumes its aspect of terror
And sorrow its pain,

Only when, away from Thee,
I turn my face towards my own dark
self.

Thou all perfect, everything abides at
Thy feet

For all time.

The fear of loss only clings to me
With its ceaseless grief,
But the shame of my penury

And my life's burden
Vanish in a moment
When I feel Thy presence
In the centre of my being



A MESSAGE

[Last Message of the Sage of Santiniketan to the Tagore Society, London.]

The failure of humanity in the West to preserve the worth of civilisation and dignity of man which they had taken centuries to build up, weighs like a nightmare on my mind. It seems clear to me that this failure is due to men's repudiation of moral values in the guidance of their national affairs and to their belief, that everything is determined by the mere physical chain of events. The first experiment in this diabolical faith was launched in Manchukuo. Those who built their power on moral cynicism are themselves proving its victims. The nemesis is daily proving more ruthless.

TAGORE'S MESSAGE

(A Thrilling Message to Modern Civilization)

*Be not ashamed, my brothers, to stand
before the proudest and the powerful
With your white robe of simpleness.*

*Let your crown be of humility, your
freedom the freedom of the Soul.*

*Build God's throne, daily upon the ample
bareness of your poverty.*

*And know that what is huge is not great
and pride is not everlasting.*

Abinwanath Igoti

There have been few more fascinating figures among contemporary Indians than Dr. Rabindranath Tagore. Philosopher and poet, he is at once an inspiration and a challenge. The calm, beautiful face, with its dark, brooding eyes, speak of that peace of achievement, and the "realization of life," which is the soul of his teaching.

Without any of the fierce denunciations so characteristic of the Western prophets, he quietly lays his finger on the vulnerable spots of our modern civilization and says, "Thou ailest here—and here." Often we realize that he holds for us those vital secrets of life, which generally elude our grasp, and apart from which our modern world, with all its developments, has not been able to make real progress.

"Not only to acquire," he would say, "is life's secret, but to realize."

We rush from acquisition to acquisition. We prosecute a horizontal quest. The lure of the

horizon calls us to a life composed mainly of eating, working, talking and travelling. We never rest. We live extensively, but seldom intensively. We are missing the highest life in what Wordsworth called the "getting and spending" business. And this Star of the East would guide our tired feet into the paths of peace. In a way unguessed by Matthew Arnold, we are to lose our misery and wild unrest by finding ourselves.

Tagore defines the aim of the forest-dwelling sage of India, "not as an attempt to acquire but to realize ; to enlarge his consciousness by growing with and growing into his surroundings." The modern civilization, on the other hand, seems to think only of subduing Nature, and wresting from her unwilling arms the treasures after which we lust. A return to Nature will, therefore, bring us into touch with that soul-side of the Universe which is one with our souls.

The sentiment which finds expression in such familiar phrases as "the right to be oneself," "the right to call one's soul one's own," are given a quite different interpretation by Tagore, from that familiar to us. "Living one's own life in truth," he says, "is living the life of all the world." In the deeps of personality is the common-soul of the Universe.

True Knowledge, he would say, is

*"To see one changeless Life in all that Lives,
And in the Separate, One Inseparable."*

(The Bhagavad Gita)

This fundamental belief in unity leads naturally to the belief that all things about us—the springing corn, the changing face of skies, the bird, and the child—are but different forms of the One Inseparable. That unity is never broken. Death itself is powerless to create a chasm in the field of reality. Our appearance and disappearance are on the surface like waves of the sea, but life which is permanent knows no decay or diminution.

A new meaning is given to life and history when we are able to catch a glimpse through all the changing events of a purpose working to an end.

According to Tagore, history is just the story of man on his pilgrimage through the shadow-haunted generations seeking to find his real Self. "Man's history," he says, "is the history of his journey to the unknown in quest of the realization of his immortal self—his soul. Through the rise and fall of empires; through the building up of gigantic piles of wealth and the ruthless scattering of them upon the dust; through the creation of vast bodies of symbols that give shape to his dreams and aspirations, and the casting of them away like the playthings of an

outworn infancy ; through his forging of magic keys with which to unlock the mysteries of creation, and through his throwing away of this labour of ages to go back to his workshop and work afresh in some new form ; yes, through it all man is marching from epoch to epoch towards the fullest realization of his soul—the soul which is greater than the things man accumulates, the deeds he accomplishes, the theories he builds ; the soul whose onward course is never checked by death or dissolution.”

This is the ultimate end of man, to find the One which is in him ; which is his truth, which is his soul ; the key with which he opens the gate of the spiritual life.

The nearer we approach our real selves the more harmonious our lives become. To achieve this unity with the Supreme One, we may have to journey long and far, but the end is sure, how wide soe'er we roam. In one of the most beautiful of his songs, Tagore says :

“ The time that my journey takes is long and the way of it is long.

“ I came out on the chariot of the first gleam of light, and pursued my voyage through the wildernesses of worlds, leaving my track on many a star and planet.

“ It is the most distant course that comes nearest to thyself, and that training is the most

intricate which leads to the utter simplicity of a tune.

" The traveller has to knock at every alien door to come to his own, and one has to wander through all the outer worlds to reach the innermost shrine at the end.

" My eyes strayed far and wide before I shut them and said, ' Here art thou ! ' "

Does not this shed light upon many of the problems which perplex multitudes of people today ? The conflicts between the nations, the inhumanity of man, the clash of wills, the inequalities, all show us men and women at varying stages of soul-growth and development. Very few have, as yet, attained to that harmony which results from losing their small selves in the whole and finding thus the Greater Self. All the tragedy of world-history lies in that pride of personality, which, spurning the whole, tries to run a separate course of its own. The path of the Past is strewn with wrecked nations, institutions, and religions which ignored the tendency of the great world-force, and tried to imprison it within the area of their own particular use. There is a rock upon which every Armada crashes ; there are mystic sands, fixed by the laws of Heaven, against which the waves of selfishness dash themselves into mere spray. The Sennacheribs, the Neros and Napoleons inevitably came to their " last phase "

because all the laws of the universe are set against monopolists. "However powerful a king may be, he cannot raise his standard of rebellion against the infinite strength which is unity, and yet remain powerful. . . . It is the end of self to seek that union. It must bend its head low in love and meekness and take its stand where great and small all meet. It has to gain by its loss and rise by its surrender."

One path to the realization of the Self is Love. It is the way God Himself takes. In creation God realizes Himself. "God so loved . . . that He gave"; and in the far-flung pageant of earth and sea and sky and human life, we see the gifts of this love.

Love is the ultimate meaning of everything around us. It is not mere sentiment; it is truth. And he that has not love in his heart misses the essential meaning locked in the wayside flower and displayed in a sunset sky or a night of stars. Love puts a man in touch with the invisible reality of which all material things are but sign and symbol, and through the avenues of physical sight the lover goes on and finds insight. Through all that the ear can hear, and the hand touch, he passes into that real world that is so very near to us all if we but realized it, where beneath the ephemeral the soul finds the eternal. Love is not blind: love is the true

sight, to whom all material things are diaphanous to the divine presence.

In the light of this interpretation, the universe as well as man is transformed. To try and escape from the world is as truly suicidal as to seek escape from ourselves. The universe has its soul-side which is one with our soul-side, and our love of life is a healthy instinct, and is really our wish to continue our relation with the great world. How foolish, then, is that imagined superiority on the part of man, which leads him to speak of the "lower creation," or to shut the world out as something which must be regarded as the enemy of the soul. "The stream of life that runs through my veins night and day runs through the world and dances in rhythmic measures. It is the same life that shoots in joy through the dust of the earth in numberless blades of grass and breaks into tumultuous waves of leaves and flowers." No, the world is not less than ourselves in soul-quality. The flowers and the stars hold our eyes to theirs because we are both rooted and grounded in the same great Whole.

The Apostle Paul glimpsed the idea of the tragedy resulting from separateness when he spoke of the groaning and travailing creation, waiting in expectancy for the revealing of the sons of God who will merge the schism and strife and contradiction of

existence in the tides of the all-embracing unity of Love.

We have not reached the highest message Tagore has for the modern mind, until we have considered his mystic consciousness of God.

How poor and inadequate seem all the abstractions and metaphysics of the Western thinkers before the calm certainty of this man who finds God wherever the peasant tills the hard ground or the path-maker is breaking stones or clearing the entangled forest. Nothing must hedge us off from this common human life. We must "leave this chanting and singing and telling of beads," and open the door of the darkened temple and find our Unseen Friend wherever we can touch a human hand or look into human eyes. His "silent steps" are heard in the forest paths, and "the golden touch of His feet" is in the light of the dawn and the joy of our hearts.

As the Old Testament psalmist proclaimed the folly of attempting to *escape* God by fleeing from the world on the wings of the morning, so Tagore proclaims the folly of trying to *reach* God by flying from the world. We are not to become ascetics. We must have the courage to say : "God is in this very spot and here at this very moment."

What an enormous lift would be given to our modern life could we get men and women to realize the sacramental nature of what we call common

things. To discover the presence of the Divine activity in the growing corn and wool would make it impossible for men to selfishly exploit these things for sordid gain and private profit. To make a "corner" in cotton would be regarded as sacrilegious as trying to "corner" the sunlight or the star-shine.

Tagore also preaches the gospel of true freedom. His condemnation of our modern freedoms would be that they have simply delivered us into fresh servitudes. We have conquered the air, but we live in fear of those "airy navies" raining down upon us a ghastly dew of death. We have conquered Space and Time, but we have become the slaves of speed, and world-weariness is written on the face of our present-day civilization. We boast that we have banished fear from the universe, but all modern nations live in fear of each other, and are armed to the teeth for working each other's annihilation. The light of knowledge has dispelled the darkness of superstition! Has it? True, we no longer dread the fabled monsters of the deep, but we live in terror of human sharks and submarines. We speak of our religious freedom, but we are in servitude to our own cramping creeds and parochial beliefs. Our religious denominations, which might be the variegated expression of the Universal Life, are too often guarded domains of isolated thought, islands of

prejudice sundered by seas of misunderstanding. This narrowness of thought and aim is robbing us of the real joy of religion and excluding from us that rich world-life, whose strong and beautiful current might flow through our souls, bringing the scent of many flowers, the murmur of many woodlands, and the light of many skies to enrich our poor narrow gardens.

Some day we may awaken to the wisdom of letting our souls have freedom from those cages of creed in which for so long they have been "cribbed, cabined and confined," and allow them to rise and stretch their wings in their native air, and beat a joyous way through the boundless blue.

To Tagore the Coming of Death is simply an event in the wonderful journey of life. Life has been good: every dawn has unfolded some fresh surprise: and who shall say that our passing behind the barriers of the moments and years may not be to experience the grandest surprise of all. And when the cycle of births and deaths has taught us all we need to learn: when we have passed through the "many mansions" of the Father's House: when in the shadowed garden of sorrow we have seen the rainbow of beauty born out of the storm, and the stars that shine eternal behind the cloud-wrack: when in the house of joy we have found the pearl of great price hidden in the wine of

gladness : when in the vast sounding-house of labour we have found at last, that all work must be accomplished joyously : when the fire of the workshop is transformed into the lamps of a festival, and the noise of the factory is heard like music, and the common tasks are performed with the same joy of creatorship which the poet finds in his poem, the artist in his art, and the brave man in his courage—then we shall have garnered all the experience necessary, and won from life the secret hidden in the great scheme of things by the All-Loving, and be ready for union with the Ocean and Source of all



HEART OF TAGORE

(An Overflowing Stream of Poet's Thoughts)

*Let my thoughts come to you, when I am
gone, like the afterglow of sunset at the margin of
the starry silence.*

Abinashanath Tago

Beauty

O Beauty, find thyself in love, not in the flattery of the mirror.

The stream which comes from the infinite and flows towards the finite—that is the Truth, the Good. Its echo, which returns to the infinite, is Beauty and joy.

Beauty is truth's smile when she beholds her own face in a perfect mirror.

We cannot see Beauty till we let go our hold of it.

Death

The child finds its mother when it leaves her womb. When I am passed from you, I am free to see your face.

One word keep for me in thy silence, O World, when I am dead, 'I have loved.'

I have a letter from my beloved: in this letter is an unutterable message, and now my fear of death is done away.

The child cries out when from the right breast the mother takes it away, in the very next moment to find in the left one its consolation.

Faith

Faith is a spiritual organ of sight which enables us instinctively to realize the vision of wholeness when in fact we only see the parts.

My faith in truth, my vision of the perfect, help thee, Master, in thy creation.

Faith is the bird that feels the light and sings when the dawn is still dark.

Fate ✓

I cannot choose the best.
The best chooses me.

God

We truly meet God when we come to him with our offerings, and not with our wants.

Man's faith in God has built up all that is great in the human world.

Your speech is simple, my Master, but not of theirs who talk of you.

The Lord is in me, the Lord is in you, as life is in every seed.

This One in me knows the universe of the many.

God finds himself by creating.

When I try to bow to thee, my obeisance cannot reach down to the depth where thy feet rest among the poorest, the lowliest and the lost.

Let only that little be left of me whereby I may name thee my all.

The sweetness of thy name fills my heart, when I forget mine—like the morning sun when the mist is melted.

God grows weary of great kingdoms, but never of little flowers.

I am able to love my God because he gives me freedom to deny him.

God is freedom, for he is light.

God eludes us in nature to call us onward; in the Soul he surrenders himself to gather us to his heart.

Your idol is shattered in the dust to prove that God's dust is greater than your idol.

Heart

My heart is not mine to give to one only, it is given to the many.

Your eyes melt my heart as the kiss of the sun
melts the snow on a mountain top.

I long to sit silent by you. But I dare not, lest
my heart come out at my lips.

Life

Life finds its wealth by the claims of the world,
and its worth by the claims of love.

Life is given to us, we earn it by giving it.

If to leave this world be as real as to love it—
then there must be a meaning in the meeting and
parting of life.

The fountain of life splashes and foams in
laughter and tears.

We cannot truly live for one another if we never
claim the freedom to live alone.

Logic

A mind all logic is like a knife all blade.
It makes the hand bleed that uses it.

Love

Love's gift is shy, it never tells its name, it flits
across the shade spreading a shiner of joy along the
dust.

She is near to my heart as the meadow flower to the earth.

I love you, my beloved. Forgive me, my love. Like a bird losing its way I am caught.

She is sweet to me as sleep is to tired limbs.

Let not my love be a burden on you, my friend, know that it pays itself.

I would be content with the smallest corner of this earth if only she were mine.

My beloved is ever in my heart. That is why I see him everywhere.

Love went for the seeking that which it knew not, leaving all it had known.

One Love it is that pervades the whole earth : few there are who know it fully.

Hasten, my heart, and spend yourself in love, before the day is done.

He who does good, comes to the temple gate ; he who loves, reaches the shrine.

Love depends upon the will of the giver, and the poorest of the poor can indulge in such generosity.



I shall stake all I have and when I lose my last penny I shall stake myself, and then I think I shall have won through my utter defeat.

O my heart, let us go to that country where dwells the beloved.

Truth is widowed without love.

It is not the lightness of pressure in the outside world which we need in order to be free, but love which has the power to bear the world's weight, not only with ease but with joy.

Love gives freedom while it binds, for love is what unites.

The flute of the infinite is played without ceasing, and its sound is love.

Chastity is a wealth that comes from abundance of love.

God kisses the finite in his love and man the infinite.

Love is an endless mystery, for it has nothing else to explain it.

A father's love, like God's rain, does not judge but is poured forth from an abounding source.

That love can ever lose is a fact that we cannot accept as truth.

He who wants to do good knocks at the gate ; he who loves finds the gate open.

Love remains a secret even when spoken ; for only a lover truly knows that he is loved.

' How far are you from me, O Fruit ? '
' I am hidden in your heart, O Flower.'

' I love, I love ' is the cry that breaks out from the bosom of earth and water.

Love counts no cost too great to realize its truth.

Let my love find its strength in the service of day, its peace in the union of night.

The leaf becomes flower when it loves.
The flower becomes fruit when it worships.

All the delights that I have felt in life's fruits and flowers, let me offer to thee at the end of the feast in a perfect union of love.

I know that this is nothing but thy love,
O beloved of my heart—this golden light that dances upon the leaves.

Man

The fish in the water is silent, the animal on the earth is noisy, the bird in the air is singing.

But Man has in him the silence of the sea, the noise of the earth and the music of the air.

Men are the children of light. Whenever they fully realize themselves they feel their immortality.

Man is true where he feels his infinity; where he is divine; and the divine is the creator in him.

Man is a born child, his power is the power of growth.

Man truly lives in the life that is beyond him. He toils for the unknown master, he stores for the unborn.

Man discovers his own wealth when God comes to ask gifts of him.

Pride ✓

Pride can never approach to where thou walkest among the poorest, the lowliest and the lost.

Religion ✓

Religion, like poetry, is not a mere idea, it is expression.

Right ✓

Wrong cannot afford defeat, but Right can.

Silence✓

Silence will carry your voice like the nest that holds the sleeping birds.

Lead me in the centre of thy silence to fill my heart with songs.

God's silence ripens man's thoughts with speech.

Truth✓

If you shut your doors to all errors truth will be shut out.

Blessed is he who does not outshine his truth.

In love we find a joy which is ultimate because it is the ultimate truth.

Woman

Woman, when you move about in your household service, your limbs sing like a hill stream among its pebbles.

Woman, with the grace of your fingers you touched my things and order came out like music.

Woman, thou hast encircled the world's heart with the depth of thy tears as the sea has the earth.

Woman, in your laughter you have the music of the fountain of life.

Woman has been man's inspiration guiding unconsciously his restless energy.

O woman, you are not merely the handiwork of God, but also of man. These are ever endowing you with beauty from their hearts. You are one-half woman and one-half dream.

Work ✓

God is there where the tiller is tilling the hard ground, and where the path-maker is breaking stones.

God honours me when I work.

World

We read the world wrong and say that it deceives us.

Open your eyes and see. Feel this world as a living flute might feel the breath of music passing through it.

I came to your shore as a stranger, I lived in your house as a guest, I leave your door as a friend; my earth.

The world is the ever-changing foam that floats on the surface of the sea of silence.

The world puts off its mask of vastness to its lover. It becomes small as one song, as one kiss of the eternal.

.TAGORE GREET'S DEATH

(A Diary of Gurudeva's Last Days)

*I have loved life so much
Why should I not love death even more ?*

Abinashanath Tagore.

July 26th

Last night Gurudeva enjoyed a sound sleep and rested well. Today he is in quite good spirits. Abanindranath, Samarendranath, Charu Babu, Amiya Babu and a few others are present. Abanindranath is Gurudeva's nephew. Gurudeva likes to talk a lot with him. Gurudeva gives reference to Abanindranath's *Gharoa Galpa* and says, "Aban, these days no one has been able to draw such a picture of me. All have tried to praise me and they have been so much lost in praise that they have forgotten the real me. Now when people will hear you, they will be able to recognize your uncle-Rabi as a practical man. They will also know what a miserable life once your uncle-Rabi led." Talking in this way they are refreshing themselves with the memories of the past. Abanindranath says, "You remember that time, uncle-Rabi, when it was raining in torrents and we were holding a meeting of the railway coolies under a goods train when the train began to move." Or Gurudeva says, "You might have not forgotten those days, Aban, when we went to ...'s house

with the purpose of collecting funds. The stairs were dark. With much difficulty we went up and saw a gentleman sitting close to a big wooden box. Just seeing our faces he gave us Rs. 500/- and it seemed as if he did not mind the sum just to get rid of us. That gentleman did not even care to enquire as to who we were and why we required the sum." Gurudeva laughs and they both relate to each other such humorous stories that while seeing them talking no one can guess from their expressions that one is an uncle of eighty and the other is a nephew of seventy. Abanindranath does not want his birthday being celebrated and he objects to it.* He raises several objections while Gurudeva scolds him and says, "Your objections do not arise, Aban. When people like to celebrate your birthday, what right have you to interfere?" What can Abanindranath say? He remains silent like a scolded child and after all says, "As you say that my birthday must be celebrated, therefore I shall wear garlands around my neck, have chandan-wood paste on my forehead and perform everything which I shall be required to do; but in no case I shall step out of my door." Hardly has he finished these words before he takes himself out of the room and Gurudeva laughs heartily. Now Gurudeva says to all those present, "Aban does not

*Santiniketan celebrated Dr. Abanindranath Tagore's 70th birthday on 19th August, 1941. A prayer was held in the *mandir* in the morning. An exhibition of his paintings remained open for four days at the Kalabhavan Museum, and a lecture on his life and works was arranged on the 20th August in the evening at Sinha Sadan.

want anything. He did not wish for anything during the whole of his life. But, you know this one man has changed the world of art; he has revolutionized the taste of the country. His countrymen were strictly against him but he bravely faced all the difficulties, and changed the atmosphere. So I say that if you do not care to maintain the prestige of this gentleman, all this will be a humbug. When I hear Aban's stories, I feel how simple and fresh my life was then. That time has passed and now no enthusiasm has been left. But, that was such a beautiful time that every dawn came in a new adore and every evening fashioned in new colours. Oh, what a wonderful time it was! I am quite confident that when you will hear Aban's stories, you will be lost in praise. At that time several things were fresh to us and we had no feeling of fear and fright. Anyhow Aban and others were quite young and they had to respect me; they also had a sense of love for myself. They never tried to know as to what would happen in the near future. They were so bold and brave that they never cared if the police would turn up. They remained in continued danger. It was in fact a preliminary period of the new age. When the book is published, you will be able to understand at least one period of the history. You will know how I shouldered the burden of my duties and how I was able to guide my comrades. You will see that Aban's word-pictures are complete in themselves. My innerself was bright with the light of youth and I felt a great

power in myself. Now it is quite clear to me that all this humbug today is of no avail; people themselves do not follow what they say; they are not the least true to their word. So I do not like it."

At 4-30 p.m. 50-c.c. glucose injection is given in Gurudeva's right arm. His body is shivering severely and this shivering remains for half an hour. After that he goes to sleep. This injection affects him to a considerable extent with the result that his temperature rises up to 102.4° .

July 27th

Last night Gurudeva had a good sleep. This morning he dictates a poem and Rani Chanda takes it down. He says, "I have got a few words in my brain, take them down or with the coming of other thoughts I shall lose them like the dawn light. I always think that my brain is empty and I shall be able to sit peacefully thereafter but in fact it never happens... why so? I take it nothing more than madness." Gurudeva is extremely happy today. He cracks a joke with Nalini Bose and Dr. Deban Bose. He says, "The doctors are in a great fix. They have taken several tests of my blood but they find nothing wrong with it. They are busy for nothing. They have to deal with a patient who has no disease. The doctors have no doubt been disappointed." Gurudeva's continual disease has made him accustomed to sleeping in a half-sitting position. From waist to shoulders pillows are placed and one pillow remains under the

knees as well. As after the operation is performed he will be required to lie down flat for a few days, the doctors say that with a view to making him accustomed to lie down flat the number of pillows may be gradually decreased. This evening, when Rani Chanda is arranging the pillow under his feet, he says, "It will be no good for me to raise my feet high. In this way I shall not be able to keep my head raised. Till today this head has never bowed down before any one while now the doctors say, 'bend your head, raise your feet;' oh, what a downfall!"

July 29th

These days Gurudeva has much anxiety regarding the operation. He says, "As the operation is to be performed, the sooner it is done, the better." He enquires from the doctors, "Baba, tell me, how long will all these small pricks continue in preparation for the big prick." All but Gurudeva know that the operation will take place tomorrow. He is not informed of it lest he may be worried. Gurudeva in course of a conversation tries to ask from Dr. Jyoti Prakash Sarkar with respect to the operation but he makes him busy with some other topic. Dr. Sarkar says, "You will not even feel it. If, anyhow, you feel some pain, that will be as slight as that caused by the daily glucose injections. I think, on one side operation will be performed and on the other you will be busy in dictating poems." Gurudeva says, "It means I shall not be teased a bit by this operation."

Dr. Sarkar replies, "No, not at all; you may please rest assured." Today Gurudeva dictates a poem in Bengali known as *Sorrow's Dark Night*.

July 30th

The operation will be performed today but Gurudeva is not informed of it. All are harassed. Who knows what will happen! But still everyone says, "There is nothing to fear." Gurudeva calls for Dr. Sarkar and says, "Come, Baba, tell me, when are you people going to perform the operation?" "Oh, tomorrow or day after," replies Dr. Sarkar. "We haven't yet decided about it. Whatever day Lalit Babu thinks best, the same day it will be done." Gurudeva keeps quiet for a long time as if he is thinking something but no one knows what. It seems that something very beautiful is coming to his brain. He dictates a fairly long poem. He gets tired while dictating the poem and murmurs to himself, "These days I get tired even with a little work." At half past ten when all arrangements for the operation are made, Lalit Babu informs Gurudeva saying, "This is a good day so I want to finish it off today. What do you think?" "What, today?" Gurudeva enquires surprisingly and then says, "Well, it is good to do it without pre-information." After a few minutes he says to Rani Chanda, "Please read to me the poem which I dictated to you this morning." Rani Chanda reads the poem quite close to his ears. After hearing the poem he says, "There is something in it which is not perfectly correct. Well, let

it be as it is ; the doctors say after the operation is performed, my brain will be quite clear. So I shall correct it as soon as I am all right."

At eleven Gurudeva is brought to the operation table and at twenty minutes past eleven the operation is done. This time passes away smoothly and today Gurudeva sleeps a good deal. He speaks a word or two sometimes but according to the doctors' advice he is requested not to speak. Dr. Lalit Babu pays a visit in the evening and enquires from Gurudeva, "Did it hurt very much or not?" Gurudeva says, "Why do you compel me to tell a lie? I shall ask Jyoti what he meant by saying that it wouldn't hurt me at all." "Everything passed off well," says Lalit Babu, "except that Jyoti's disappointment remains that you did not dictate any poem." Gurudeva laughs.

July 31st

Last night Gurudeva rested well. This evening he speaks a word or two, "Oh, pain!... awful pain!" Afternoon onwards he is lying quite quiet. During the daytime he remains sleeping.

August 1st

Last night Gurudeva was restless. Since morning he has not spoken even a word. Off and on he says, "oh, oh" as if he is feeling pain. When someone asks him anything he merely nods his head. His eyes are open but mouth is closed. He stares continuously. No one knows and no one can understand what he is thinking about. In his

eyes one can see a helpless look of a child. He keeps quiet for the whole day ; all seem worried and anxious today. The whole day doctors have been coming and going. They have been consulting each other and often discussing certain points in a very low voice.

August 2nd

Today Gurudeva is in an unnatural sleep. Now and again he groans. When any one tries to give him food, he becomes angry and says, "Don't disturb me, please." Today it is good to hear him even in an angry mood. A doctor enquires from him, "What kind of pain do you feel?" He smiles and replies, "Is it possible to explain, doctor?" After midday he again falls into a comatose condition and the whole night passes away without any change.

August 3rd

Last night Gurudeva's condition was critical. This morning he speaks very little. If any one tries to give him food or medicine, he becomes annoyed. As usual, after midday he again falls into a comatose condition.

August 4th

Yesterday morning a telephonic message was sent to Santiniketan with a purpose to call for Bothan. So she has come and calls Gurudeva quite close to his ears. He lifts his head with great difficulty. He looks towards her and nods his head.

Two or three doctors attend on him day and night. At about half past ten telephonic message is sent to Dr. Indo Bhushan. The medicines are given but to no effect. At eleven he lifts his right hand and moving his fingers speaks in a trembling voice, "What will happen, now? I do not know, what will happen? Oh, let us see what happens."

August 5th

The fever is rising day by day and Gurudeva is growing weaker and weaker gradually. Today also Gurudeva is in the same comatose condition. Sir Nil Rattan comes in the evening. He calls Gurudeva but no response comes forth. As long as he sits, he keeps caressing Gurudeva's hand with his own. His nose seems to be drawn to the left, his cheeks are swollen and his left eye is inflamed. His fingers and toes feel moist.

August 6th

Since last night he has been gazing but no one knows at what. There is a frightful look in his eyes. This is a *puranmashi* day. If this day passes away smoothly, better things can be expected. But the present condition is despairing. Once in the morning when Bothan called him just close to his ear, "Babamasey, Babamasey," he looked towards her and said in a very low voice, "eh." From this it is quite clear that he understands everything but is unable to speak. He has lost much of his sight; his eyes are cloudy now. Cough hurts him a great deal. It is not possible to say that there is

anything which does not tease him. His elder sister, Baruna Kumari Devi, comes to enquire of his health and spends her whole night here. At times she comes trembling in the room to see her brother but cannot come close to Gurudeva's bed. Quietness prevails all over. The full moon is in its full view from Gurudeva's room. At twelve in the night his condition becomes very critical but after some time the doctors give some hope. Now he groans with every breath.

August 7th

Since 4 a.m. cars are coming and going one by one. All the near and dear ones of Gurudeva have arrived. The sky has grown pale in the east. Amiya-di brings flowers from the new champa tree. Rani Chanda offers those flowers at Gurudeva's feet. The paleness of Gurudeva's face resembles the golden colour of the champa flowers. At seven Ramananda Chatterjye stands beside Gurudeva and offers prayers. Mahamahopadhyaya Pandit Vidushekhara Bhattacharya sits close to his feet and chants mantra :

Om pita noh'si pita no bodhi namaste'stu ma ma hinsih.

Many a time this mantra has been heard from Gurudeva's lips. Gurudeva himself has translated it into the following words :

"Thou art our father; let us wake up in the light of the truth that thou art our father. We salute thee; do not smite us with death."

Someone is singing outside in a very melodious

voice. All who hear him, go out of control. At about nine they begin to give oxygen to Gurudeva. Breath continues as before with the change that now there is no groaning though a low sound is heard. This sound grows fainter and fainter to such an extent that at thirteen minutes past twelve midday (Calcutta time) Gurudeva breathes his last at his ancestral home, Jorasanko, at Calcutta. The crowd outside is impatient to have Gurudeva's *darshan*. Amita-di, Buri and others dress Gurudeva in white Benares silk—pleated dhoti, punjabi of garad silk, a folded chaddar stretching from the shoulders to the feet, chandan-wood paste on the forehead, flower garland around the neck, and heaps of white flowers on each side. Rani Chanda places a lotus bud in the hand which lies on his breast. He looks like a king sleeping in kingly fashion in his royal robes. People come, offer *parnam* at his feet and depart.

SANTINIKETAN

(A Cultural Heritage from Gurudeva)

Both Madame Chiang and myself feel happy to visit the home of the great Poet at this international seat of learning. We did not see the Poet in person, but we are glad to witness the spirit he has left behind in this institution he has founded. We fervently hope that the teachers and students, who have gathered here, will try to uphold the tradition and continue to build up the great work, of which the foundation has already been laid by your Gurudeva. Just as our Sun Yat-Sen had established the spirit of universal brotherhood amongst us and raised the glory of new China, so your great preceptor has elevated the spirit of your great land and brought to it a new awakening.

Chiang Kai-Shek

"We feel that if we had not visited your institution, our visit to India would not have been complete," writes Madame Chiang Kai-Shek in a personal letter to Shri Rathindranath Tagore from Calcutta.

The Poet ever continued to show undiminished interest in the fate of China and never ceased to express his admiration for the great qualities of her people, their love of knowledge and the finer pursuits of the mind to which they have held fast even in the turmoil of their life-and-death struggle. It was only a few years back when Japan made perfidious offers of friendship and the illustrious Poet voiced, in noble language, the burning indignation which India felt in being asked to grasp in amity a blood-stained hand. The Japanese offer mainly took the form of letters written to our Poet by the Japanese Poet, Yone Noguchi.

"With a crusader's determination and with a sense of sacrifice that belongs to a martyr, our young

soldiers go to the front. Their minds are light and happy, the war is not for conquest, but the correction of mistaken idea of China, and for uplifting her simple and ignorant masses to better life and wisdom.....I do not know why we cannot be praised by your countrymen. But we are terribly blamed by them, as it seems, for our heroism and aim," said the Japanese poet in his first letter addressed to Dr. Tagore who replied in part :

" You seem to agree with me in your condemnation of the massacre of Ethiopia by Fascist Italy but you would reserve the murderous attack on Chinese millions for judgment under a different category. But surely judgments are based on principle and no amount of special pleading can change the fact that in launching the ravening war on Chinese humanity, with all the deadly methods learnt from the West, Japan is infringing every moral principle on which civilization is based.....

.....You are building your conception of an Asia which would be raised on a tower of skulls. I have, as you rightly point out, believed in the message of Asia, but I never dreamt that this message could be identified with deeds which brought exaltation to the heart of Tamerlane at his terrible efficiency in man-slaughter."

" India's heart is one with China," says His Excellency Lord Linlithgow. And, our Poet was certainly of the same belief. He also believed that China was the veteran of Asia's fight for freedom.

He revived the age-long Sino-Indian spiritual and cultural relation by visiting China and by the promotion of Chinese studies in Visvabharati. This cultural endeavour has taken concrete shape in Cheena Bhawan in Santiniketan.

“By unrighteousness man prospers, gains what appears desirable, conquers enemies, but perishes at the root.” This is what our Indian sages have proclaimed. But the present-day Western civilization goes a long way to demonstrate the human instinct which makes the man aim at his gaining superiority to his fellow-beings and his using all means, fair and foul, in his power with the purpose of ruling over others. It is a foolish belief, an insanity, in honour of which the man has suffered division and dispersion at the cost of complete unity, and has blindly sacrificed candour and co-operation resulting in disturbance of the peace of the world..... Today every man feels himself to be a patriot. It is good. But, what a wonder, all the patriots seem to observe and feel, in a true sense of the word, the magnificence of their country when she violently captures the territories of the weak nations, when she keeps her false prestige by adding to the number of her slaves, when she plunders the helpless, when she does not hesitate to ravage others for the benefit of her own people, and when she commits such crimes which if committed by an individual, will bring no less than capital punishment.

China is proud of her people who are patriots

no doubt but do not possess the spirit of aggression. They do not pounce upon others to deprive them of their freedom. The principles which Dr. Sun Yat-Sen, the founder of the Chinese Republic, has bequeathed to the people of his country, have been responsible for the new spirit that has inspired the Chinese people to do their bit in making a better world for mankind. The hostility between the Chinese and the Japanese began more than four year ago. The Japanese have slaughtered their men and women, destroyed their industries and occupied their territories; but still no one during his stay in India heard the Chinese Leader using any opprobrious term against Japan or the European Axis Powers. Chinese, in fact, undertake action only when their equilibrium is disturbed. And in this respect China is at one with India. The Generalissimo has truly said, "Should freedom be denied to either China or India, there could be no real peace in the world." In the 2,000 years' history of China and India's intercourse which has been of a purely cultural and commercial character, there has never been an armed conflict. Indeed, nowhere else can one find so long a period of uninterrupted peace between two neighbouring countries. This is irrefutable proof that our two peoples are peace-loving by nature. China and India will certainly join their heads, if God helps them to make a new world in which men and women can live in peace and happiness. Our direct contact with China was linked up with the establishing of

Cheena Bhawan, a department of Sino-Indian studies, in Santiniketan. The Cheena Bhawan was opened in March, 1937, and its achievements in this short period of five years encourage us to build high hopes for its future. The Generalissimo and Madame Chiang Kai-Shek have donated a sum of Rs. 30,000 for the completion of the extension of the Cheena Bhawan at Santiniketan. The Generalissimo and Madame have also donated Rs. 50,000 to be used in any way Shri Rathindranath Tagore might see fit, in memory of Dr. Rabindranath Tagore as a small token of their deep admiration of the wonderful work of the Poet.

Tan Yun Shan is a great Chinese genius. He acts as a director of the Cheena Bhawan. He believes in India's cultural contribution to China. "It is a well-known fact," he says, "that China imported the great religion of Buddha from India. In the wake of Buddhism India has given China her science, philosophy, art, literature, music, dance, architecture and everything that went to enrich her culture and civilization." In 1938 when Prof. Shan was on leave in China, Pandit Vidhushekhara Bhattacharya directed the academic activities of the department.

Santiniketan is two miles out of Bolpur Railway Station, three hours' journey from Howrah. It is surrounded by a typical upland plain, dry and treeless, cracked with rivulets and rough with low thorns. In the rains its bareness flushes into the green of

paddy fields. Maharshi Devendranath had a great devotion for this place. The place was being called Bolpur after the name of the adjoining railway station till 1863 when the Maharshi bought this land and broke its nakedness by copsewood and a couple of fine chhatim trees which keep alive the memory of his meditations in which he was often accompanied by his youngest son, Rabindranath Tagore.

"These broad open spaces round Bolpur," writes Satischandra Ray, "help one to understand the burning fierceness of the sun, and reveal in the storms the power of the wind. When I go out into the fierce heat which fills the surrounding plains, I feel as Saturn must have felt when the rings of fire were placed round his head. It seems as if in a less intense light I could not have seen the images of the sky, bright and burning like molten gold, or of the lonely plain, with its distant red road gleaming across its widespread fields."

Mr. Ray was a young poet who joined Rabindranath when the school was started and died after one year of service. The above words have been quoted from his diary published in the *Modern Review*, October, 1922.

The educational work of Santiniketan does not come in the scope of this booklet. But it cannot be quite passed over. First of all it is essential to mention here that the Poet planned much more than a school. Stereotyped education in India, these days,

is mere memorisation in a foreign tongue and one can safely call it machine-made and spurious. The Poet was of the opinion that education should be a pleasure rather than to be a burden for both the teacher and the taught. He sought a home for the spirit of India, distracted and torn in the conflicting storms of the age. To Tagore the great gift of ancient India was her meditation, calm, which he wished to recapture.

At Santiniketan classes are held out of doors. A student can sit in the branches of the trees, if he likes. There is a *puja mandir*, made of glass, all-side open for air. Here worship is conducted twice a week. Meditation is observed every day in the morning and evening at a fixed time. No student is compelled to meditate. He is rather taught to remain quiet so that others may not be disturbed.

The unity of India is not more than a dream to many of her great sons. But Santiniketan is not merely a home for the spirit of India, but one for the spirit of all nations, for Tagore's mind was so universal in its sympathies that it could never rest with a part. The school does not observe festivals belonging to Hindu or other religions. There are only half-holidays for the birthdays of Christ, Buddha, Chaitanya, Mahomet, the Maharshi, Rammohan Roy and other great men. There are also two long vacations. In ancient India there used to be very close friendly relation between the *guru* (teacher) and the *shishya* (pupil). The Poet revived the same tradition in his

school. The school also keeps up the tradition of religious emphasis. The students are supposed to do a great deal of praying and meditating. The times of their social intercourse are under the teachers. The students are unreservedly under their teachers' control as the children are with their parents. With this closeness of association between teachers and students the Poet had tried to combine the Western new theories of independence.

The school was started in 1901 and it has stood more than forty years' test. But still we fail to judge its real value which will, in fact, be proved when India has got independence and has to stand or fall by the work of her own children. Our universities are following the scheme of Lord Macaulay in support of which he himself said that it should be their endeavour, as far as possible, to create such a mass in India as would do the intermediary work by conciliation and compromise between them and millions of their subjects, and that those people might be Indian by the difference of colour but staunch English by virtue of their thoughts, feelings and tastes. And, Santiniketan is the only school in India which has an idea behind and a great inspiration in it. Santiniketan, in fact, is a self-governing republic. The students have their own dairy farm, their own hospital, post-office, printing press, temple, workshops. The Visvabharati Printing Press, started in 1922, had made way for elaborate arrangements by which Santiniketan has been issuing its own publications.

Santiniketan has also been serving its country by giving wide publicity to the Poet's thoughts in the shape of the *Visvabharati Quarterly* in English, and the *Visvabharati Patrika Quarterly* in Hindi. The latter was published under the management of the Hindi Bhawan in January last for the first time. The Hindi Bhawan was declared formally open in the first month of 1939 while the foundation stone was laid in January, 1937, by Deenabandhu C. F. Andrews. The cost of the construction was met from the donation received by the trustees of the estate of the late Rai Bahadur Bisseswarlal Halwasiya. The school has ample arrangements for imparting industrial training to its students and the same is being done very efficiently. The school has its own looms for weaving. The library is rich with the generous gifts from France and Germany. The Poet put in it various autographed books which he received from authors at various times. In Edward Thomson's opinion, in 1926, "the library is a better one in pure literature than any to which the citizens of Calcutta have access." The students of Santiniketan are taught to work for the rural uplift. They go out to villages to run night classes for the labourers and the Harijans. In Santiniketan they hold their own courts; they impose their own penalties; they do not inflict corporal punishment.

The Poet himself had given his life to the school. "Santiniketan, Sriniketan and Visvabharati—all these are manifestations of his action," says

Mahatma Gandhi. " They were his soul for which Deenabandhu Andrews left his world, followed by Gurudeva. Our true homage should be to maintain these institutions which he is watching from wherever he may be." Now our main concern is with ' what Santiniketan has done for the Poet ? ' Santiniketan has given him a retreat, a peace-abode. He could get here peace the like of which he could get nowhere else. In this place of friendliness all was leisure ; the Poet himself was accessible at almost any hour. Dawn or moonlit night would show the Poet's majestic figure roaming in the beautiful wild place of *sephali* groves. In autumn nights *sephali* shed forth flowers and the Poet would appear among their fragrance before the young girls of Santiniketan, the daughters of the teachers, gather the flowers for garlands.

Here naturally came to him the poetry which brought peace to his own mind, message to the world abroad, solace to the sick and weary heart and strength to the faint and flickering faith. Here naturally came the music which the peace-loving world heard a long time ago and still rings in their ears though the master musician is gone.

" They will raise memorials all over the world," says Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, addressing the boys and girls of Santiniketan, " but you have got to be his best memorial—you boys and girls of Santiniketan who were privileged to come under the protection of his angelic wings. You, who have seen him face to face,

have implicitly received his last benediction. You will be apostles to the world of that great son of God, your Gurudeva, carrying the torch kindled from that immortal fire which illumined and awakened India into the world of beauty, strength and freedom."

WHAT THEY SAY

(Gurudev in the Eyes of the World)

Gurudev's soul is immortal and he lives though dead. Gurudev longed to serve the world through India and breathed his last while doing so. His experiment is unfinished. His mortal remains are no more but his soul is immortal like ours. Taken in this sense none perishes or dies. None is born. Gurudev lives significantly. His tendencies were universal, mostly heavenly through which he will be immortal. Santiniketan, Sriniketan and Visvabharati—all these are manifestations of his action. They were his soul for which Deenabandhu Andrews left his world, followed by Gurudev. Our true homage should be to maintain these institutions which he is watching from wherever he may be.

W. G. S. S.

works have abidingly enriched the literature, art and idealism of their ancient motherland.

—*K.B. Allah Bux, Premier, Sind.*

The death of Dr. Tagore means an irreparable loss. He was as much a poet as a seer. He gave to Indian poetry an honoured place in the literature of modern times. In him the world had lost a great poet and India one of her greatest sons.

—*K. M. Munshi, ex-Home Minister, Bombay.*

A great Indian, who raised the status of India in the international sphere, has passed away. It is difficult to get his place filled. The death is a grave national loss, an irreparable loss.

—*Dr. N. B. Khare, ex-Premier, C.P.*

Rabindranath has given a shape and form in his songs and poems to the hopes and aspirations, sorrows and sufferings of an age. If, perchance, the pages of the history of the last eighty years are lost to us, it will not be difficult for us to rewrite these pages from the poems, songs and other writings of the Poet.

To Rabindranath the land of his birth was a great truth, a living entity. There was no place for provincialism, nor sectarianism in his patriotism. This conception of India was indeed as great and as sublime as his soul.

—*Sir Aziz-ul-Haque, Vice-Chancellor,
Calcutta University.*

The death of Dr. Tagore is an irreparable loss to our country. He will ever live in the memory of his countrymen.

—*Sir M. Usman, Vice-Chancellor,
Madras University.*

Dr. Rabindranath Tagore's death removes from our midst one of those who dominated our national

life for more than a generation. To many a sick and weary heart his songs have brought solace, to many a faint and flickering faith his words have given strength.

—*Professor Amarnath Jha, Vice-Chancellor,
Allahabad University.*

Tagore was the greatest figure of the modern India renaissance. A poet of his qualities we have not had for some generations. He was a great prophet and wise counsellor and a guide for our future destiny. Millions outside India respected our country and its culture on account of his writings. I have lost a very dear friend. That he was born in our country means that God is not disappointed with us. The greatest respect that we can render to his memory would be to stand for the spiritual ideal of this great man and fight for it against every attempt to subjugate the country.

—*Sir S. Radhakrishnan, Vice-Chancellor,
Benares Hindu University.*

India has lost in him its great national poet whose thoughts and feelings, expressed in the most charming rhymes, gave inspiration to the highest sense of patriotism and love of our Eastern culture. Tagore's poetry was appreciated not only in this country but throughout the civilized world, in the East as well as the West.

—*Sir Zia-ud-Din Ahmad, Vice-Chancellor,
Aligarh Muslim University.*

A prince among men has fallen! Rabindranath Tagore was a world figure. Santiniketan which he created and loved showed that his ideal in life was the establishment of international goodwill. I cannot help feeling that this is the message which his life and works give to the world.

—*Sir Maharaj Singh, Vice-Chancellor,
Lucknow University.*

What impressed me most during the visit here was the atmosphere of ineffable peace, so serene, so philosophic, at the same time so artistic. The institution has reached the highest phase of Indian art not merely in external paraphernalia but also in the manner of living and ways of thought.

As time goes on, I am quite sure that Dr. Tagore's contribution towards making India great in the eyes of the whole world will be better realized and more fully understood. His personality, as expressed through the ideals and achievements of the institution he had created and fostered, shows as nothing else can, the essential man, the great lover of humanity and culture.

I do hope that the institution will be helped in every way to develop on lines visualized for it by its great founder. As one who revered him, I did my little bit when I obtained a grant for the Vidya Bhavan from the Nizam's Government. Now that the Poet is no more, it should be everybody's endeavour not only to maintain but also to stabilize and develop this institution which he has bequeathed to the future generation as a precious gift and trust.

—*Sir Akbar Hydari.*

The death of our beloved Guru has created a void in our heart, which it will be impossible to fill. He has died full of years and honours and with the consciousness of having served his beloved motherland to the best of his great power.

—*Sir P. C. Ray.*

The noblest and most beautiful career in literature in our time and for a long time has closed; and the name of Tagore takes its place in the galaxy of immortality; in achievement worthy of the comradeship of the masters of unforgettable imaginative utterances of Kalidas, Shakespeare, Goethe, and Hugo, and their kindred, but with a vision and purity of ideal and speech that set him in deep

intimacy with the little band of supreme prophets of the spiritual ascension and destiny of humanity, with Blake and Shelley. With his glorious name goes that of his country, whose spirit he understood and revered and for whose freedom and welfare he laboured all his long life. For India in her hour of bereavement remains the consolation that only she, with her reverence for the spiritual values of life, her sense of the inner world, her simplicity and gentleness, could have been the proud mother of a son whose name will glorify hers through the ages.

—*Dr. James H. Cousins.*

We cannot blame God Yama who has relieved the great soul from bondage to a body which served as its temple for eighty years. Yet India must mourn the passing of her ambassador to the world of culture. To a handful it is given to serve the motherland so profoundly with pen and tongue and with mind and heart, and among them Rabindranath Tagore's name must take a front place. In paying our homage, in giving him our last salute let us resolve to be true to ourselves, to our India and to humanity in our own humble fashion as Tagore was in his own mighty way.

—*Madame Sophia Wadia.*

Model Copy
Rohini = 1290
Rohini

Madame Sophia Wadia

Am. Irishman Club

31 5 1914.

Chamberlain

7 7 18

18/9/15

Blanca

TAGORE'S FRIEND

(Irish Poet—William Butler Yeats)

*Most writers belong to the literary world, Yeats
belongs to the world.*

Rabindranath Tagore

eye of the mind, as a magic-lantern produces an illusion on the eye of the body.

In the ordinary way a symbol would mean a mark of a character taken as the conventional sign of some object or idea or process, e.g., a badge is a symbol of authority; a uniform is a symbol of a particular organization. Yeats employed two kinds of symbols, intellectual and emotional. By means of his symbols he would produce the singular effects on the minds of the readers—the agony, the ecstasy, the plentitude of belief. He writes in his *Ideas of Good and Evil*, "If I watch a rushy pool in the moonlight, my emotion at its beauty is mixed with the memories of the man that I have seen ploughing by its margin, or of the lovers I saw there a night ago; but if I look at the moon herself and remember any of her ancient names and meanings, I move among the divine people, and things that have shaken off our mortality."

In his search after symbols Yeats does not strain himself. Sometimes it so happens that a symbol dawns into his consciousness of whose meanings he is entirely ignorant. His dreams at times supply him with symbols whose meanings he takes years to discover.

Yeats does not belong to the category of the "nature poets" unlike Wordsworth for whom nature was divine, and who sought communion through nature with nature's indwelling Soul. Wordsworth's landscapes have the coolness and

freshness of water colour. For him

“ A primrose by a river's brim
A yellow primrose was to him
And it was nothing more.”

With Shelley nature was a mystical revelation of that eternal spirit in whom all modes of life are one. With Byron nature is full of passionate freedom which the conditions of the human lot denied to man. With Arnold nature's calm was a refuge and a solace to the fretful and troubled heart. The deeply religious quality of this kind of nature poetry is conspicuous by its absence in the utterances of Yeats with whom nature is always subservient to his own mood providing at best a background to reflect some state of mind or soul.

We often hear of the magical influence of poetry. The expression in general means nothing ; but apply to the writings of Yeats as those of Milton, it is most appropriate. With both poetry is sacred, something more than life, a faith, an enthusiasm, a passionate religion. Their poetry acts like an incantation. Its merit lies less in the obvious meaning than in the occult power. They are mere words but they are words of enchantment. No sooner are they pronounced than the past is present and the distant near. New forms of beauty start at once into existence and all the burial places of the memory give up their dead.

It may be mentioned that the merit of his Muse

was recognized in 1923 when he was awarded a Nobel Prize for literature.

On January 29, 1939, this illustrious pioneer of the 'Celtic School of Poetry' passed away from this earthly sojourn leaving behind a legacy rich in thought and rhythm. Towards the close of his life he modified his style and tried to be "as cold and passionate as the dawn."

TAGORE'S FATHER

(A Life Sketch of Maharshi Devendranath Tagore)

The direct communion of the human soul with the Supreme Spirit was the most salient point of his teachings. No Gurus or Prophets stand between our soul and our God. We see him face to face, and hear His voice in the innermost depths of our conscience.

Satyendranath Tagore

It is a common observation that old women love their grandchildren a great deal. Maharshi was fortunate enough to partake of the love of his grandmother. She was very fond of him. And he always considered her as his all in all. He spent the pleasant days of his childhood in the company of his grandmother. While sleeping, sitting or eating he did not leave her side. She was a staunch believer in her religion. She was very regular in her visits to the temple of goddess Kali. Young Devendra always accompanied her to the temple. Whenever it so happened that the grandmother went for the pilgrimage of sacred places leaving him behind, he wept very bitterly and his lamentations were a cry for grandmother.

A few days before death grandmother told Devendra, who was then a grown-up lad, that whatever she had she would give to him and to no one else. After a short interval she handed over the keys of her box to him. He found in the box, when he opened it, a plenty of silver and gold coins.

According to the doctors' advice grandmother was brought to the river-bank. She remained living for three days by the side of the Holy Ganges. When the curtain of her life was drawing to a close Devendra spent his days and nights by her death-bed. He was then only eighteen years of age.

Up to that time the hero of our tale had got all facilities of entertainment. He led a life of primrose dalliance. Hitherto he had never heard a call for the higher life. What is God? What is religion? He did not care to probe. He was never trained accordingly. He was in the dark; he had never seen the light.

Maharshi was born in May, 1817, in Jorasanko, Calcutta. His father, Dwarkanath Tagore, was a well-to-do personality. He was very lavish in his expenditures. His extravagance brought him the title of prince and he had the proud privilege of being called 'Prince Dwarkanath' by the people, in and outside Bengal, who knew him. Being the son of a prince Maharshi was brought up in grandeur and glory, though to form the religious side of his life grandmother's influence had a greater access.

He was about thirty years of age when his father breathed his last. At his death Prince Dwarkanath was in England. That was his second visit to England. From worldly point of view father's death was a great loss to Devendra because after that he had to face a host of troubles and to undergo unusual difficulties. But a keen observation could make one believe that the Invisible had put him to test to gauge the extent of his spiritual power. When the time came that he might perform the mourning ceremonies of his father, he had, as he was the eldest son of his father, to take the major part. He had to face a great commotion in his ownself.

About twelve years previous to this happening, when his grandmother had passed away, he found himself suddenly disillusioned and new realities began to dawn on his consciousness. At that time he was absolutely absent-minded. Life was an unpleasant role for him, and the worldly atmosphere was no less dreadful to him than the gravity of the moonlit night in a graveyard. Everything in this world had no taste for him and he failed to find any place

where he could get peace of mind. . . . One day after the demise of grandmother, when the evening sun was peeping from behind the golden screen of the west, this song broke from his lips :

“ Vain, oh ! vain is the light of day,
Without knowledge all is dark as night.” .

and drew off the curtain of darkness from the eyes of his innerself. . . . This was his first song.

After that he began reading Sanskrit with all his fervour and piquancy. He was very fond of taking lessons in Sanskrit from his very boyhood, and was favoured by fortune in this noble cause ; he had ample facilities to fulfil this long-felt desire of his. Their family *purohit*, Kamlakant Chundamani, was a learned teacher in Sanskrit and Philosophy. He, very gladly, took charge of giving lessons in Sanskrit to the future Maharshi who in return promised to support the son of the Pundit after the latter's death.

He did not like to see God in the darkness of belief rather in the light of knowledge, and for this aim of his he had put every endeavour. He felt that with the knowledge of the outward things we can reach the inner core of our ownself. One day, when he was absorbed deep in thought, he imagined those days of his early youth when once he had a peep of the Infinite visible in the infinite heavens. Now, again, he gazed towards the sky with a meaningful look in his eyes. The sky was studded with countless stars and planets. In this heavenly beauty he happened to have a sight of the Eternal, and seemed to feel that it was His glory who has been the source of our limited knowledge, and who is the Creator and Protector of the universe. But He Himself does not possess any form or shape ; He is Light—an Eternal and Infinite Light. He did not create this world with His own hands rather He brought the whole universe into existence simply with His will. He is neither the idol of the temple nor the

image of the family.... These thoughts compelled Maharshi not to have the tinge of faith in idolatory.

Now, when he had to perform the mourning ceremonies of his father, Prince Dwarkanath, Maharshi was entangled into an unusual apprehension and he could find no satisfactory way to get out of it. All the domestic ceremonies were swept out by idolatory while according to the Brahma covenant he felt a duty, imposed upon himself, that he should not take part in the idolatrous rites. From every corner he was advised, and at the same time threatened in some way or the other, that it was no good for him to go out of the way and perish the ancient family convictions. But Maharshi had a very strong determination and was, in no case, inclined to submit to any such rite or conviction which, he knew, was contrary to his faith. Raja Radhakant Dev tried to make him understand in a very mild and proper way that to stand against the ancient faith was a clear indication of his being prepared to revolt against the society of the day, and that society could not bear to see its rebel exist in the world. His younger brother, Girindranath Tagore, also opposed him on the grounds that this procedure of his would enrage their near and dear ones who would be obliged to cut off all connections with them, and that such a treatment of non-co-operation from their own kith and kin would make their lives an unbearable burden. But Maharshi had the courage enough to bear all the difficulties he was expected to come across but could not, on any account, like to do contrary to his belief in which light of truth was visible to him. Consequently he was deserted all alone. But he was found more firm than a rock. He refused to participate in the idolatrous rites and performed the ceremonies according to the form which he had himself prepared for the occasion. This measure of reform raised a storm of opposition from his orthodox relatives, and

created permanent breach in the family. It was a heavy material loss to Maharshi. But the gain was comparatively of better nature. His relatives and friends deserted him but the Master of the three worlds, the Creator of the universe, the Infinite Eternal, his Almighty Father, generously holding him close to His bosom compensated his loss with an everlasting profit. He stood up against the popular superstitions and fallacies with a heroic zeal supported by a glimpse of the eternal light. Day by day this conviction was gaining hold on his mind that he who would gather immortal palms must not be hindered by the name of goodness, but must explore if it be goodness. Nothing is at last sacred but the integrity of your own mind.

Prince Dwarkanath died buried under debris of debts. After his death when the accounts were checked, his liabilities amounted to about one crore while the assets were not more than forty-three lacs. Most of the debts were borrowed by the Prince to maintain his princely dignity and status. And all these debts were in the name of his firm. Prince Tagore, with a view to safeguard his generation, had converted some of his property in the form of a trust.

The manager of the firm, Mr. D. M. Gordon, called a meeting of the creditors and informed them that the proprietors of the firm were prepared to hand over every bit of their property other than that in the safety of the trust into which law did not allow any one to have any access. When the proposal was put before the creditors they seemed inclined to accept it because no better approbation could be expected. But, such a proposal did not succeed to appeal Maharshi's sense of justice. He, after a brief consultation with his younger brother, declared that they would not avail themselves of the protection afforded by the trust, rather would place

everything unreservedly in the hands of their creditors till all their high liabilities were liquidated.

Beholding Maharshi's spirit of sacrifice the creditors were so much touched that—one of them, it is said, actually shed tears—after a deep thinking over the matter and with the intention of rendering true support they decided to take charge of the whole property and sanctioned an annual remuneration of rupees twenty-five thousand as a subsistence allowance for the bereaved family. . . . This just treatment from the creditors made Maharshi feel extremely happy.

However, the creditors could not keep the property in their own hands for a fairly long time because they were so much impressed by Maharshi's clear conscience that within a period of two years they voluntarily relinquished the estate to his management. Although it took Maharshi plenty of years to clear off the debts with compound interests, yet he did not let loose the honesty of his intention to be impressed by the outward influence. His wise management and exemplary self-denial afforded him every convenience to pay off the debts to the last penny.

An example of his honesty is exuding not merely from the matter of payment of the debts but Prince Dwarkanath was extraordinarily generous; he never held his hand from free giving and munificence. He had made several promises of financial help with various institutions, but his sudden death blocked his way of fulfilling all such promises. However Maharshi considered it his maiden duty to honour the promises made by his father and besides abundance of other financial help he offered a charitable society of Calcutta, whom Prince Tagore had given a promise of the help of one lac of rupees, not only the promised sum but also the compound interest counting from the date of promise.

Once Maharshi was away to his *zamindari*

and was returning home after a long absence. It was a rainy season and the last day of *Savan*. There were dark clouds in the sky, and the river was in flood. The boatmen were standing at the bank of the river enjoying the scene of the storm. But no one of them had courage enough to row his boat in the river. The waves were leaping several yards high from the surface of the river and were making the boats at the shore dance in ecstasy. . . . But a fairly long time had elapsed when Maharshi left home; he was very anxious, rather restless, to see his people at home. After midday when there was a slight lull in the storm, Maharshi asked the boatman if he could sail at that time. The boatman hesitatingly agreed saying that if his honour ordered him to do so. Maharshi felt some spiritual pleasure in this devoted reply of the boatman and requested him to put out the boat. The boatman reluctantly unfastened the boat and put up sails with confidence upon his God. Wind was blowing violently. With a few shoves the boat was away from the shore. Hundreds of boats were fastened to the shore. Seeing a boat in the river the boatmen cried out at the top of their voice, "Don't go; turn back." The waves were rising high with such a zeal that at every moment a wall of water was seen in front of the boat. The boat could not keep itself still against the shocks of waves. The other shore was not visible. The force of the wind, the roar of the clouds, the rage of the storm—all these would make Maharshi lose heart. The sound of the boatmen's voices was echoing in his ears. The boat had reached quite far from the shore.

The boat was set on sail with full confidence upon God and now there was no support available except the invisible hand of God. The boat was leaping forward dragging into the frightful waves of the river. Suddenly, Maharshi saw at a small distance another small boat jumping and leaping on the

surface of the water presenting a scene of a beautiful unconsolated child in the lap of her mother, just taken away from her breast. Within a few moments the boat was quite close to Maharshi's boat. The boatman was very much impressed by their courage and could not help saying, "No fear; go ahead." These words fell upon the ears of Maharshi as if someone had infused in him a fresh life. . . . Who was at such a time to encourage him? This was exactly the voice he wanted to hear; but, alas, where was the source of that voice? Did it come from the boatmen? No, not at all; that was an everlasting voice of the Eternal.

As soon as Maharshi began to feel that God was without shape and form, the feelings of abhorrence against idolatry arose in his mind. It was a usual practice of his that he used to remain out on tour during the days of Durga Puja festival; his main purpose to do so was that he wanted to remain aloof from the idolatrous rites and customs which had become a part and parcel of his family life and which were prevalent in the family in spite of all his endeavours.

Leaving aside the numberless places he visited in the Province of Bengal, Amritsar, Lahore, Multan and Rangoon are worth relating. He went to these places preaching and proclaiming the Brahma religion, and establishing Brahma Samajs where practicable.

Maharshi was on the verge of thirty-seven when his younger brother, Girindranath, passed away. He had been controlling the management of the firm with his judicious system of work, sufficient capacity for hard work, efficient competency for management and excellent ability in business. So much so that whereas the management of the firm was concerned, his death had created a void which at that time seemed something like impossible to fill in. By this time many debts had been cleared, many

still remained. Some of the creditors unable to wait any longer had filed suits against Maharshi Devendranath and had obtained decrees also. During those days Maharshi used to spend whole of his time, after breakfast, in the office of the Tatwabodhini Sabha, situated on the second floor in the Brahma Samaj Building, looking after the daily work of the Sabha. One day, after breakfast, when he was about to go to the Sabha his people requested him not to go there that day because they feared that there was a possibility of his arrest. But Maharshi, considering it an idle caution, went to the Sabha office without any fear and busied himself with his daily work as usual. After a short interval a Bengali clerk came up to him, a bit perplexed, and said in a very low voice, "Didn't I send you a word that you might not come over here today." After this pointing him to the bailiff standing by his side said, "He is Mr. Devendranath Tagore." The bailiff showed him the warrant and asked him to pay off rupees fourteen thousand at once. "I haven't got rupees fourteen thousand now," replied Maharshi. "Then come to the sheriff," asked the bailiff. So he sent for a carriage. When it came, the bailiff took him in it to the sheriff. As soon as the news of his arrest reached his family members a great consternation arose among them. Everyone was saying that he had requested him not to go to the office that day but he did not pay heed to his warning and intentionally got himself into trouble. However, some of the family people stood his surety and he was released on bail.

No sooner did he come home than he heard that his uncle, Prasannakumar Tagore, was somewhat angry with him on the grounds that the latter did not consult him in any matter. He also said that if Devendra had taken his advice, he would have cleared off his debts. He, therefore, went to see his uncle next day. Prasannakumar gave him every consolation

and told him that he was not required to do anything ; he should let his uncle receive a whole of the income of his *zamindari* and his debts would be paid off by his uncle as soon as they fell due. In that course no one would worry Devendranath for his debts. . . . He agreed gratefully to that proposal and thereafter used to make over to his uncle the whole income of his *zamindari* while he undertook to clear off his debts.

Naba Bannerjye was present there that day and was talking with Maharshi with regard to the *Tatwabodhini Patrika*. Suddenly Prasannakumar interfered with a loud laughter and addressing Maharshi said, "Can you prove the existence of God?" "Can you prove the existence of the wall in front of you?" replied Maharshi. Prasannakumar laughed heartily at this quick reply and said, "Upon my word, what a question? We can see that wall is there, what's the need to prove?" "I can see that God is everywhere, what's the need to prove?" replied Maharshi. "Do you think God is the same as that wall?" said Prasannakumar. "To me God is more near than the wall," replied Maharshi.

In 1856 when he was thirty-nine years of age, he went up to the Himalaya for the first time. Here he heard the voice on which was based his future. He spent about a year and a half among the Simla hills. During the whole of his stay there he remained absorbed in intense study and contemplation.

On his return to Calcutta he presented his inspired utterances in a series of sermons. As chance would have it, in case of almost every sermon he had to speak extempore. So there cannot be even a tinge of doubt in the correctness of their being the true reflection of his inner thoughts. It was the only reason that the audience could be affected a great deal by his sermons. His eldest son, Satyendranath Tagore, and others had taken his sermons into writ-

ing which were published afterwards in the form of a book entitled *Exposition of Brahma Dharma*.

No doubt Maharshi was deadly opposed to idol-worship, his instinctive actions smacked of orthodoxy. His ideals differed greatly from those of the educated young community of that age. In his opinion the ancient India was an affectionate bosom, open for all, wherein all such elements were nourished which according to the religious and moral convictions could be called pure in all respects. There would be no exaggeration if we say that he had imbibed the spirit of the ancient *rishis* more than any of his contemporaries. "It is singular," says his son, Satyendranath Tagore, "that the one field of religious inspiration which was foreign to him was the Hebrew Scriptures. He was never known to quote the Bible, nor do we find any allusion to Christ or his teachings in his sermons. His religion was Indian in origin and expression, it was Indian in ideas and in spirit."

In 1863 Maharshi bought a land at Bolpur, in Birbhum District, about 100 miles from Calcutta. There he afterwards made an abode of peace called Santiniketan. In those days Santiniketan consisted of a small house, a small garden, a *mandir* and a library. Besides, there were available all kinds of conveniences for meditation and solitude. In his early days he used to spend his time there with his disciples in contemplation, and the visitors who happened to come over there to see the place were entertained by Maharshi who felt pleasure in rendering such service. He dedicated Santiniketan with all its grounds and belongings to the public for the purpose of worship by a trust-deed.

There is many a year between his retirement from public life and death. During this long interval he spent many years in tours. Out of the places he visited Bombay, Cashmere and Hongkong are worthy of mention. For a short time he lived alone

in a separate house in the Park Street. But this separation did not last for a long time ; ultimately he returned to his ancestral home at Jorasanko, Calcutta.

Towards the last days of the year 1902, Maharshi's health gave way and since that time he was constantly ailing. Several times during the last days his life peeped through the darkness of 'despair' but every time his strong constitution and a will to live staved off death. In those days of distress the following stanza from Hafiz was always on his lips :

"The bell is tolling. I have heard the call
and am ready to depart with all my
luggage."

At last he heard the call and on Thursday, the 19th January, 1905, at fifty-five minutes past one before daybreak he left for the eternal abode of peace.

"Son of Dwarkanath Tagore and the first secretary, I believe, of the British Indian Association," writes Shri Anand Mohan Bose in a letter addressed to Shri Satyendranath Tagore on receipt of the news of Maharshi's death, "he might have been a maharaja long before this. But he chose for him the better part. Maharajas die but maharshis live in the grateful hearts of the unborn generations."

GANDHIJI AT SANTINIKETAN

(Gandhiji's Third Visit to Santiniketan)

The visit to Santiniketan was a pilgrimage for me. I had long intended to go there, but the opportunity offered itself only on my way to Malikanda. Santiniketan is not new to me. I was first there in 1915 when it was yet taking shape,—not that it is not doing so even now. Gurudev is himself growing. Old age has made no difference to the elasticity of his mind. Santiniketan will therefore never cease to grow so long as Gurudev's spirit broods over it. He is in everyone and everything in Santiniketan. The veneration in which he is held by everyone is uplifting because it is spontaneous. It certainly uplifted me. The title the grateful students and staff gave him accurately describes the position he commands in Santiniketan. He does so because he has lost himself to the place and the congregation. I saw that he was living for his dearest creation Visvabharati. He wants it to prosper and to feel sure of its future. He had a long talk about it with me but that was not enough for him, and so as we parted he put into my hands the following precious letter :

" Dear Mahatmaji,

You have just had a bird's-eye view this morning of our Visvabharati centre of activities. I do not know what estimate you have formed of its merit. You know that though this institution is national in its immediate aspect, it is international in its spirit, offering according to the best of its means India's hospitality of culture to the rest of the world.

At one of its critical moments you have saved it from an utter breakdown and helped it to its legs. We are ever thankful to you for this act of friendliness.

And, now, before you take your leave of Santiniketan I make my fervent appeal to you. Accept this institution under your protection, giving it an assurance of permanence if you consider it to be a national asset. Visvabharati is like a vessel which is carrying the cargo of my life's best treasure, and I hope it may claim special care from my countrymen for its preservation,

With love,

RABINDRANATH TAGORE "

Who am I to take the institution under my protection? It carries God's protection because it is the creation of an earnest soul. It is not a show thing. Gurudev himself is international because he is truly national. Therefore all his creation is international, and Visvabharati is the best of all. I have no doubt whatsoever that Gurudev deserves to be relieved of

all anxiety about its future so far as the financial part is concerned. In my reply to his touching appeal I have promised all the assistance I am capable of rendering. This note is the beginning of the effort.

Calcutta,

February 26, 1940.

W. G. S. S. S.

In the course of a letter which he wrote on the eve of his visit to Santiniketan Gandhiji described it as a 'pilgrimage.' As an institution that, pending his arrival, invited and gave shelter, under its hospitable roof, to members of his 'family' on their return to India from South Africa, it has always claimed a soft corner in his heart. And the sweet associations of Gurudev and Borodada, the late Mr. Pearson and Deenabandhu Andrews have only heightened that feeling. To attune himself to that feeling, or perhaps under the stress of that feeling, Gandhiji before starting made a drastic reduction in his entourage, cutting it down to the barest minimum irrespective of every other consideration, and though many at that time failed to catch its import, it gave Gandhiji, in the retrospect, a supreme satisfaction to have taken that unbending moral stand as the only course befitting the solemnity of the occasion.

This was to be his third visit to Santiniketan, the last one being fourteen years ago—in 1925. He

knew it was overdue. Every report about Gurudev's failing health accompanied by a 'love message' from the Poet that Deenabandhu sent to Gandhiji from time to time, reminded him of it. It was Deenabandhu who had acted as the 'go-between' on the present occasion, when he conveyed to Gandhiji the Poet's pressing invitation to visit Santiniketan. But by a cruel irony when that long-looked-for visit actually came he was not there to witness it. He had been suddenly taken ill a few days before and removed to the Presidency Hospital, Calcutta, in a precarious condition. He was more than a member of the 'joint family' of Gurudev and Gandhiji, and the shadow of this domestic illness overhung and tinged the whole of Gandhiji's Santiniketan visit.

A Sacred Remembrance

A small reception had been arranged for Gandhiji on the afternoon of the day of his arrival. It was held in the *Amrakunja*, a spot rendered sacred by its associations with the late Maharshi Devendranath Tagore, Gurudev's father. It was here, tradition says, that he used to sit and sometimes remain absorbed in meditation from eventide till daybreak. By his will he converted it into a place of universal worship of one Brahma, the Formless and Invisible, and a sanctuary for all wild animal life.

The function commenced with a chanting of the Poet's favourite Upanishadic text, with the haunting

refrain

“ Those who come to know Him,
They attain to immortality.”

य एतद्विदुरमृतास्ते भवन्ति ।

The address of welcome was read by Gurudev himself. It was short and impressive. But Gandhiji's thoughts were far away with Charlie Andrews in Calcutta. On a previous occasion Deenabandhu had sung :

“ And I have seen His face—
have seen and known
This sacrament was given.

*

*

*

And I can wait the dawning of the day,
The day-star on my night already shining.
The shadow and the veil shall pass away,
Death shall make true my dreaming.”

And now he lay hovering between life and death. Gandhiji made a feeling reference to him in his reply.

“ My uppermost feelings on arriving here are about Deenabandhu,” he began. “ Perhaps you do not know that the first thing I did yesterday morning on alighting from the train at Calcutta was to pay him a visit in the hospital. Gurudev is a world poet, but Deenabandhu too has the spirit and temperament of a poet in him. He had long yearned to be present on the present occasion, to drink in and store up the memory of every word, movement and gesture relating to the meeting with Gurudev.

But God had willed it otherwise and he now lies in Calcutta, stricken down and unable even to make full use of his speech. I would like you all to join me in the prayer that God may restore him to us soon and, in any case, may grant his spirit peace.

Sweet Old Memories

“ I have not come here as a stranger or a guest. Santiniketan has been more than a home to me. It was here that the members of my South African family found warm hospitality in 1914, pending my arrival from England, and I too found shelter here for nearly a month. The memories of those days crowd in upon me as I see you all, here assembled before me. It grieves me that I cannot prolong my stay here as I would have loved to. It is a question of duty. In a letter to a friend, the other day, I described my present trip to Santiniketan and Malikanda as a pilgrimage. Santiniketan has truly, this time, proved for me a ‘ *niketan* ’ of ‘ *santi* ’—an abode of peace. I have come here leaving behind me all the cares and burdens of politics, simply to have Gurudev’s *darshan* and blessings. I seek often claimed myself to be an accomplished beggar. But a more precious gift has never dropped into my beggar’s bowl than Gurudev’s blessings today. I know his blessings are with me always. But it has been my privilege today to receive the same from him in person, and that fills me with joy.”

Vidyabhawan

The next day the whole morning was devoted to making a round of all the various departments of Santiniketan, followed by a visit to Sriniketan. Kshitishbabu, "the sole survivor" of the older group of teachers whom Gandhiji had contacted during his last visit to and stay at Santiniketan, acted as the guide. It was a privilege in the Vidyabhawan to meet Haribabu, the compiler of the Bengali dictionary, who has, single-handed, after twenty-eight years of continuous labour completed a work which entitles him to be ranked with literary giants like Shri Nagendranath Bose, the author of Bengali *Vishwakosha*, and Prof. Murray of the Oxford Dictionary fame. Sixty-four volumes of his monumental work, we were told, have already been published, and the complete set, when it is ready in another three years' time, will run into eighty and cost from forty to fifty rupees.

In the Cheena Bhawan or the Department of Chinese Culture, Prof. Tan-Yuan Sen was not there, being away with the China's goodwill deputation that is touring India, but his good wife was there to meet Gandhiji. Gandhiji was here shown the library of Chinese books that the Chinese nation had presented to the Visvabharati. The Chinese children, Gandhiji was told, were not one whit behind any other in establishing a freemasonry with their Santiniketan chums, and felt quite at home with them undeterred by the "language difficulty."

A Philosopher Prince

In the section of Islamic culture, Gandhiji was delighted to see an original manuscript transcribed in his own beautiful caligraphic hand by that Philosopher Prince—Dara Shikoh, who through his mysticism arrived at a catholicity and breadth of religious outlook that was unheard of in those days and is rare even in our own. In a monograph published by the Department we are told how he patronised men of all denominations, saints, theologians, philosophers and poets of every creed and community, studied Sanskrit, became deeply interested in the Vedanta and Yoga philosophy, and from the learned pundits of Benares and contacts with Yogis, initiated himself into the practices of Yoga. Denounced by the fanatical set as a heretic he was nevertheless a true Mussulman. In a lengthy introduction to the Upanishads which he himself translated into Persian, he has explained how he was led to their study through his search after Reality. "Subtle doubts came into my mind for which I had no possibility of solution and, whereas the Holy Koran is almost totally enigmatical and at the present day the understanders thereof are very rare, I became desirous to collect into one view all the revealed books, as the very word of God itself might be its own commentary, and if in one book it be compendious in another book it might be found diffusive." Proceeding he adds that as a "mystic enthusiast and ardent advocate of the unity of God," he searched for

Reality no matter in what language, and that in quest for Truth, in the higher stages of its realisation, religion is of no matter. And so he came to 'Upanekhats' " which are a treasury of monotheism." And yet it was not that he wanted to raise a hybrid growth by grafting Hinduism on Islam or *vice versa*. As Dr. Yusuf Hussan has pointed out, " he was actuated by a desire to prove that both Islam and Hinduism, in appearance so fundamentally dissimilar, are essentially the same. Both represent spiritual efforts of man to realise Truth and God."

In Nandababu's Sanctum

The last to be visited was the Kala Bhawan, Shri Nandababu's *sanctum sanctorum* of art. " Like Krishna, he hides himself behind his work," was the epigrammatic description given of him by a friend to Gandhiji. Retiring, shy, reserved, he is the pattern of humility and unassuming unostentatiousness. He lives only in and for his art which he has taken as his spiritual *Sadhana*. " You cannot become an artist," he is fond of telling his pupils, " unless you identify yourself with the humblest and the meanest of God's creation." A gentler soul has hardly ever breathed. All the children are his chums, and it is a common sight to see Nandababu make a detour to avoid a bunch of youngsters engaged in a ' lark ' lest he should intrude upon their ' freedom ' !! " Art is a jealous and exacting mistress," is another favourite saying of his. But though fastidious and meticulous

to a degree in his devotion to his ideal, he has never been known to send away an aspiring artist without an encouraging word.

His genius is only matched by his industry. There is hardly a nook or a corner in Santiniketan but bears the impress of his art and industry. A wall to him is only a bed for the execution of a fresco or a bas-relief panel, a ceiling simply a surface for bearing his cartoons, a lump of clay plastic material to be turned into a beautiful model. As a friend remarked half seriously, half in banter, if Nandababu had his way, he would use our great globe itself as material for turning out some cosmic piece of art ! It gave Gandhiji particular satisfaction and joy to know that, next to Bengal, Gujarat had provided Nandababu the largest number of pupils.

Gurudev at Seventy-nine

Gandhiji had several intimate talks with Gurudev. But they are of too sacred and personal a character for recapitulation here. At seventy-nine the Poet's countenance shows no diminution in its lustre, the eyes burn brighter than ever, the step is firm although he needs support and moves about only with difficulty. The voice has lost none of its vigour or its sonorous musical quality, and the spirit retains all the freshness and irrepressible exuberance of youth. He insisted upon Gandhiji witnessing the performance of his favourite musical pantomime, *Chandalika*, in which his grand-daughter played the

principal part. He personally supervised the rehearsal and even delayed the programme by a quarter of an hour till he was satisfied that everything was tip-top. It was a sight to be remembered when at one stage he almost jumped to the edge of his seat and broke out into a musical interpolation to provide the cue when the performers had or seemed to have lost it. His enthusiasm must have got an infectious quality in it, for I have never seen Gandhiji follow with such sustained and rapt interest any entertainment as he did this one during the full one hour that it lasted.

A Saddening Reflection

From a bare spot that Santiniketan is originally said to have been and notorious for being the haunt of dacoits, it has under the magic of Gurudev's personality grown to its present size, and yet, as Kshishbabu remarked to Gandhiji with a sigh, "the scholars who are engaged in research work are cramped for space, and when enough accommodation is forthcoming, who knows, the present race of scholars at any rate may have run its course !"

Harijan, - March 9, 1940

PYARELAL

DEENABANDHU

(A Brief Biographical Sketch of C. F. Andrews)

I had the rare blessing of having Andrews—a real Englishman, a real Christian and a true man—for a very close friend. Today in the perspective of death his unselfish and courageous magnanimity shines all the brighter. The whole of India remains indebted to him for innumerable acts of love and devotion. But personally speaking, I am especially beholden to him because he helped me to retain in my old age that feeling of respect for the English race with which in the past I was inspired by their literature and which I was about to lose completely. I count such Englishmen as Andrews not only as my personal and intimate friends but as friends of the whole human race. To have known them has been to me a treasured privilege. It is my belief that such Englishmen will save British honour from shipwreck.

Rabindranath Tagore

" Since coming to live here in South India I have been more and more struck with the tenderness of the landscape and the peace that broods over it. What a lovely country it is ! There are the hills in the distance, with their gentle rise and fall. The sunrise and the sunset, through the monsoon days, bring with them an indescribable glory. Whenever the rain descends nature at once responds, and the earth becomes green with such a richness of colour that the eye drinks it in with pleasure."

Above words are taken from *Sandhya Meditations* by Deenabandhu Andrews. *Sandhya Meditations* is one of the two books which were in press when he died. It was published a few days after his death. In this book he adored beauty—beauty which was an expression of Truth and Goodness. To him the place was really very beautiful. He found beauty in the sky with the clouds, in the mists of the dawn, in the buildings of the hospital amid the trees, in the calm and cool

atmosphere of the prayer house, and in everything around him.

Beauty is inward. It remains in the inner core of the man's heart. Deenabandhu's simplicity of character, peace of mind, love for nature, made the outward atmosphere look to him calm and pretty. Beauty arose from his own heart and he loved beauty.

When about thirty-eight years ago Deenabandhu decided to come to India, there were friends who remonstrated with him. He had won a Triple First and was a Cambridge Don. If he stayed at home he might one day be venerated as the senior-most Professor of History in Cambridge, or if he entered politics he might one day be Prime Minister. He would not be moved from his resolve. "India calls" were the two words he uttered with such deep conviction that it silenced all remonstrance.

Some four or five years ago friends found that he was feeling the effects of a none too robust health and approaching age. They asked him to settle down in a quiet spot in England and give more fruits of his pellucid pen to the world. But he said 'no,' he could not think of settling anywhere else but India. The surgeon who performed the two operations on him suggested that he should go to Europe and have the second operation there. But how could he leave his real home? "Whatever happens to me," he said, "must happen here."

" I do not know an Englishman," says Mahadev Desai, " who loved India more and who has served India better. That was not because of an emotional impulse but because he knew India, went on with the years knowing her and loving her more and more, he knew the wrong that his countrymen had done to India, consciously or unconsciously, and he had resolved to atone for it."

A few days before his death when Mahatma Gandhi visited Deenabandhu on his return from Malikanda in the Presidency Hospital, Calcutta, Deenabandhu referred to the crisis in Europe and said, " Bapu, *Swaraj* is coming. I see it coming. India will be free." " I know it," replied Gandhiji. " Do you know ? " resumed Deenabandhu. " I am quite reconciled to my illness. I think it was God's blessing in disguise. It has given me a wonderful experience which I would never otherwise had."

Deenabandhu could work wonders at times when the welfare of the human race was concerned. In South Africa when the Final Agreement with General Smuts was about to be signed came a wire to Gandhiji saying Kasturabai was seriously ill. But Gandhiji refused to go until the Agreement was signed by the General. Deenabandhu ran to Smuts who was deeply touched, signed the Agreement and released both to go to Durban. At the time of the last Yeravda Fast of August, 1933, he worried Sir Reginald Maxwell at all hours of the day and night until the final release of Gandhiji. In 1932

during the Premier's Award Fast, he was now with Lord Halifax, then with Sir Samuel Hoare, then with Mr. McDonald, and saw that there was not a moment's delay in announcing the decision. On countless other occasions he took upon himself the mission of peace and worked at it without regard of the result.

"He had ahimsa in a larger measure than most people I have known," says Mahadev Desai. His kindly eyes and smile which were but an index of the loving heart that beat within his breast will always remain with those who came in contact with him. It is rarely that one can say about any person that he or she never spoke a harsh word to or of any one. But it is true of Andrews. "I have seen him return from interviews with officials," writes Amrit Kaur, "where harsh words had been said to him and about those whom he loved. But no anger ever entered his heart, and he knocked again and again at the doors of those who misunderstood him, his overflowing love for India, and the burning desire that his England should do justice to her. On more than one occasion has he returned to our house bereft of his coat and drenched with rain because he felt that some poor hillman carrying a heavy load on his back needed the garment more than he did."

His Christianity was as wide as his humanity and the Scriptures of other faiths were to him not less dear than that of his own. It was a favourite saying of his that, but for his Indian and non-Christian

contacts, his own understanding of Christ would have remained incomplete. He literally followed Christ's saying, "Get you no gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses, no wallet for your journey, neither two coats, nor shoes, nor staff," sometimes with romantic results. Money given to him for something he needed himself has often fulfilled another's want. And always these unselfish acts were performed with the utmost joy. Tears would come to his eyes when he heard of oppression or injustice anywhere, and his utter humility was one of his greatest attractions.

"Charlie is a baby and needs to be mothered," used to say Miss Agatha Harrison who acted sometimes Deenabandhu's secretary. "The first thing I do, when he returns from India, is to empty his pockets, lest important messages from friends across should go to the laundry instead of their proper destination."

"The only occasion," refers Pyarelal to an occasion, "when as Gandhiji's cashier, I entrusted him with a ten-rupee note to pay off his tongawala, was when Gandhiji was convalescing after his appendicitis operation in the Sassoon Hospital, Poona. In the evening Charlie Andrews returned and innocently told me to pay off the tongawala as the ten-rupee note had 'slipped out' of his 'open pocket.' I shall never forget the trouncing which I got from Gandhiji when I reported the matter to him. 'Could you not foresee,' he thundered, 'he

would give it away to the next beggar, if he did not lose it? You might as well entrust a baby with cash.' ”

We have, Deenabandhu says explaining a text from St. Matthew, to enter into our inner chamber, shut the door of our hearts from all wandering thoughts, to keep out the world and all its storms, and to be pure in our inmost hearts for “ He is our father who seeth that which is secret.”

“ Charlie Andrews was above all an educationist of a very high order,” writes Mahatma Gandhi. “ He came out as an educationist to help his friend and chief Principal Rudra. He picked up an educational institution of international reputation as his final home. To the making of it he dedicated his life.” Gurudev had an established international fame. Andrews was its best advertiser. Gurudev had no advertising ability. He simply worked, wished and then left his wishes to fate. Andrews felt attracted to the Poet, and found his peace and permanent abode in Santiniketan. England was his birth-place ; he never tore himself away from her. But his soul found its full expression and home in Santiniketan, and Gandhiji knows, as he says, as he was his co-worker, that he went literally from door to door in order to get funds for Santiniketan. His love for Santiniketan was certainly as great as the Poet's, and Santiniketan, as it is at present, is due as much to Andrews as to the Poet. Probably Andrews was the more persistent of the two.

Santiniketan was Andrew's permanent Indian home. It is the place with which for over a quarter of a century he affectionately identified himself. To the welfare of this institution Andrews gave his whole-hearted devotion. No private resources could be adequate for the support of such a centre of study and research, and many of the financial and other contributions which have been made to it from East and West alike have been owed to Andrews' perseverance, hard work and faith in its future.

Deenabandhu was a great friend, in the true sense of the word, of the poor, depressed and the labour class. His services in the cause of the South African Indians were outstanding and his humanitarian appeals for the better treatment of Indians overseas have always received the ear of the Government and the attention of responsible European opinion. His services in the cause of Indians in South Africa, his simplicity, his constant endeavours to bring about a better understanding between the European and Indian communities, his constant thought for the poor, will always remain fresh in the minds of those for whom he lived and died.

"Mr. Andrews had the greatest of gifts—love," writes Dr. Edgar Brookes, a senator in South Africa, in a letter to Mahatma Gandhi. "I would rather be like Mr. Andrews than the Prime Minister of a great country. He was the closest among all the people that I have ever met to what I imagine Jesus to have been. He brought something to India. He learned

much from India and much from yourself. Those who were made humbler and better by knowing him will, like myself, want to thank you for helping to make him what he was."

Mr. A. G. Fraser of Elgin tells a story about Deenabandhu which is worth repeating here. "The noblest of British Governors that I have known, Sir Gordon Gaggisberg, who literally gave his life for Africans, was anxious to know Charlie and he asked me to arrange a meeting, if possible, for lunch in his club, the Army and Navy Club in Pall Mall. It is one of the most rigid clubs in London in its standard of dress, so I told Gaggisberg that Charlie would not be dressed for clubland. He did not care about that, so the lunch was arranged. On the day, I was seated with Sir Gordon when the porter came and said : ' Sir, there is a man at the door who says he has an appointment with you, but I did not like to let him in till you had seen him.' I said to Gaggisberg. ' That's Charlie,' and it was. He was worse dressed than I have ever known him to be in Europe. But Gaggisberg was too delighted to meet him to think of that. We had lunch at a small central table and admirals, generals, governors came up to greet Gaggisberg who was newly back in England. He introduced them all to Charlie. Thus we retired to an alcove for a quiet talk, and Charlie's visit to British Guinea was fixed up. Thus Charlie had to go and Gaggisberg saw him down to the street and finding a taxi himself for him put him into it. As

the taxi left, he followed it with his eyes, his head bent. It disappeared round a corner and he stood very still. Then he turned to me and said, 'I feel as though I had been honoured to give lunch to my Lord.' It was the meeting of two great men and they met for the sake of Indian labourers in Guinea."

"As those who desire to be one in heart and soul with the people of the land," says Deenabandhu, "we must not expect or even wish them to approximate to our standard of living, but must continually expect and wish ourselves to approximate to their's. There is a vernacular of thought and habit and temper to be learnt as well as a vernacular language."

He was a true friend of the poor, a real ally of the miserable, a sincere associate of the humble and a good companion of the depressed. His death left an aching void which it would not be possible to fill. Rarely are the Englishmen able to identify themselves as he did with those whose interests seemingly or with the material point of view conflict with England's.

"In the death of C. F. Andrews," says Mahatma Gandhi in a statement to the press, "not only England, not only India, but humanity has lost a true son and servant. And yet his death is a deliverance from pain and a fulfilment of his mission on this earth. He will live through those thousands who have enriched themselves by personal contact or contact with his writings. In my opinion Charlie

Andrews was one of the greatest and best of Englishmen. And because he was a good son of England he became also a son of India. I have not known a better man or a better Christian than C. F. Andrews. India bestowed on him the title of Deenabandhu. He deserved it because he was a true friend of the poor and down-trodden in all climes."

An appeal in connection with Deenabandhu Memorial was issued over the signatures of Abul Kalam Azad, S. K. Datta, M. K. Gandhi, M. M. Malaviya, Sarojini Naidu, Jawaharlal Nehru, V. S. Srinivasa Sastri and Foss Wescott (Bishop), and we give below an extract of the same :

"It was true insight which caused an Indian friend to interpret the initials C F. A. as meaning 'Christ's Faithful Apostle.' Christ was the centre of his life. Devotion to Him was his outstanding characteristic and the source of his inspiration and strength. During the last months at Santiniketan he often expressed the hope that in this place, where the civilisations of the world can share with each other the bases of their strength, there might be established a Hall of Christian culture which could do for India's thought through contact with the Western world what the 'Cheena-Bhawan' is expected to do for our relationship with China. The central purpose of the Hall would be the study of the teaching and character of Christ and its application to the solution of international problems. It would seek to attract scholars and students, especially of

the East, to the task of interpreting in their own modes of thought the spirit and mind of Christ. We envisage a modest building, sufficiently endowed to enable us to offer such scholars and students a home at a minimum cost, with simple living accommodation, meeting hall, and the library whose nucleus Charles Andrews had already begun to assemble. He himself made Santiniketan his headquarters during a life of practical Christian service which reached out from here to the ends of the earth. We hope that such a Hall would enable others consecrated to the same kind of service to enjoy the same kind of home.

"The full carrying out of this programme will require a fund of at least Rs. 5,00,000 (£40,000). We ask Andrews' friends and admirers all over the world to give liberal support to a scheme which will make possible, in his name, the preservation and enrichment of this work nearest to his own heart."

But the response made through the memorial appeal had been very poor though the organization of the fund principally rested upon Gandhiji's shoulders. Gandhiji had done nothing in the hope that Deenabandhu's solid work for submerged humanity would need no organized effort and that it would evoke spontaneous response. After waiting for about two years Gandhiji was obliged to put forth his personal efforts. He came out and succeeded to collect the funds of rupees five lacs within a week's time. The funds are intended to be spent for the

following four objects :

- (i) Ensuring the permanence of the present established work by an endowment to enable Santiniketan to fulfil Andrews' high hopes for it, unhampered by the constant financial anxiety with which it is now burdened.
- (ii) A small but properly equipped hospital.
- (iii) The provision of ' Deenabandhu wells ' in the Birbhum District.
- (iv) The provision of the Hall of Christian Culture.

